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THE A B C'S OF DISARMAMENT
AND
THE PACIFIC PROBLEMS

By
ARTHUR BULLARD

THE STRANGER
A MAN'S WORLD
THE BARBARY COAST
THE DIPLOMACY OF THE GREAT WAR
MOBILIZING AMERICA. OUR NATIONAL PROBLEMS
PANAMA, THE CANAL, THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE
THE RUSSIAN PENDULUM: AUTOCRACY—DEMOCRACY—BOLSHIVISM

The A B C'S of Disarmament and The Pacific Problems

BY

ARTHUR BULLARD



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FOREWORD

THE COST OF ARMAMENTS

No two estimates agree on even the simplest item in the expense of armament competition—the direct governmental appropriations for military purposes. Should the expenses of Cadet Corps in the Public Schools be included? An exact calculation of the proportion of our National Income which we are spending on the liquidation of past wars and preparations for new ones is impossible; the most impressive estimates vary from 80 to more than 90 per cent.

However, the budget figures of the different nations represent only the smallest element in the Cost of Armaments. Our larger dictionaries give a rare word “illth,” which deserves more usage than it gets, for in its contrast to the commoner word “wealth” it aptly describes a large part of the life about us. Of the commodities which we produce on our intricate and marvelous machines, not all can be called “wealth.” We make not only

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such useless things as wooden nutmegs, but also harmful drugs.

No better illustration of “illth” could be found than munitions. The production of a high explosive shell absorbs a great deal of inventive ingenuity, working capital and skilled labor. Suppose it rots in innocuous desuetude. All this energy which might have produced “goods” of value is sheer waste. But if the shell goes off, as its designers planned, it destroys wealth much greater than its cost. So with our battleships. If they gradually rust into obsolescence, that is the best we can hope. If they are ever used, the production of illth will far outrun the original expense.

There is still another and vaster indirect cost in competitive armaments—the undermining of credit. Any attempt to estimate the expense of preparing for war, even if it starts out with determination to keep on a hard-headed dollar-and-cent basis, forces a consideration of credit and immediately you are in the deep waters of psychology, beyond the bookkeeper’s power of appraisement.

More and more in the last few generations “credit” has taken the place of “cash” in our business transactions. The development of international finance and world trade has brought us wool from Australia, flax from Russia, silks from the

Orient and has opened markets for our products the world around. There was general confidence, based on the assumption that all the great nations were solvent. Who can say now what nation's credit is good? Today the French Government's formal "Promise to pay" twenty cents is worth from five to ten cents. With the other nations it is merely a question of more or less and none of them can restore their credit to par so long as their armament expenses outrun their income and turn each year's budget into a deficit. We are relatively fortunate, because we have ten to twenty cents left out of every dollar to spend on health and wealth and wisdom. But some of the nations are spending more than their income on "illth." The imminence of bankruptcy is so obvious that credit transactions, without which production and commerce is strangled, are impossible.

This psychological factor is of course the greatest item in the cost of competitive armaments, although it is harder to plot on a graphic chart. During the War and immediately afterwards we heard a great deal about "Reconstruction," but all the fine plans were hampered, most of them entirely thwarted, by the frame of mind which these armaments typify. Progress? Human betterment? Increased production of wealth? Credit is ruined. Capital is tied up—or lost. We count

up the unemployed in millions. But throughout the world the armament factories are busy.

The Medicos have discovered that Fear upsets the balance of the stomach fluids and stops the process of digestion. It is clear even to the layman that Fear arrests the processes of production and exchange. Everybody admits that another Great War would be disastrous, but on all sides we see and hear the preparations for it. It is aside from the point to argue that war in the Far East is not inevitable. Just the bare possibility of it, and the probability is frequently discussed in the press, blocks the development of a profitable Oriental trade a great deal more seriously than the burden of taxation to buy more warships.

An accountant can put down figures and make graphic charts to show how much of our National Budget is turned into illth for war purposes. But who can determine the percentage of enterprise and energy that might be devoted to the increase of our common wealth, which is paralyzed by noisy preparations for war? The Fear of War is infinitely more expensive than the cost of armaments.

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THE A B C'S OF DISARMAMENT
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THE A B C'S OF DISARMAMENT

CHAPTER I

THE DEFENSE OF VITAL INTERESTS

MEN always strive to defend what seems to them precious. This instinct of private life dominates International Relations, but when diplomats talk of the things which nations hold dear, they call them "Vital Interests." This is an elastic phrase, but, in spite of its frequent abuse, it has a real meaning. The "vital interests" of a nation are the things which its citizens are determined to defend—even at the cost of war.

Civilized man is just as intent as the savage on safeguarding his precious possessions; that he more rarely resorts to brute force is not because he is less intent, but because he has found methods which are surer. Nations as well as individuals have made some halting progress towards civilization; they have invented certain methods of

agreement for the protection of their interests, which are cheaper and more effective than war.

All will admit that the defense of its territory from such devastation as overwhelmed Belgium is a "vital interest" for every country. The face of the world is scarred with obsolete and abandoned frontier fortresses, which illustrate the "natural" method of defending the homeland from invasion. Humanity, from the days of the Chinese Wall to our own times, when the suburbs of Liége were disfigured by steel and concrete bastions, has spent appalling sums on such defenses. But we would not complain seriously of the expense. No price is too high for protection. The imbecility of these forts was not in their cost, but in their futility.

It was the New World which set the example in the "civilized"—as contrasted with the "natural"—method of protection from invasion. There are few frontiers in the world as long as that which separates us from Canada or Argentine from Chili. Neither is fortified. In both cases the vital interest of security from hostile raids is founded on agreement—much greater security than any founded on armament.

The Agreement, which guards our Northern Frontier, is more than a formal document—although a Treaty was signed at Ghent—it is really a habit of mind, a more civilized outlook on life.

Back of it, giving it more vitality than the seals and signatures, is the established conviction of both peoples that war would be a shameful surrender to barbarism. We have our disputes over wood-pulp and such like things but, although very few of us have read the Treaty of Ghent, we know that we are not going to fight.

I remember my blank amazement, some years before the War, when a German officer told me that Britain would not dare to support France in a continental war, because it would give us an opportunity to grab Canada. In the same way, some German propagandists in this country tried to make us uneasy when the Canadians began concentrating forces for service in France. How did we know that they would not make a raid on Boston or Chicago? But none of us ever turned a hair over such scare stories. We trust each other. It is not only the cheaper and more civilized, but far and away the most effective method of defense.

The Canadians, however, would not have demobilized, after the War, if they had suspected us of aggressive designs, and there is nothing in our history to suggest that we are less ready to defend our interests. This is the crux of the whole problem of armaments. Men and nations will defend whatever they consider their vital interests. If they cannot do so, by confident

agreement, they will arm. If they are afraid they will spend their last cent buying guns. No serious reduction in armament can be expected unless, and until, there is a reduction in distrust and fear.

* * *

The problem before the delegates at the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments will be to extend the zone of agreement and decrease the sphere of distrust. It is a matter of bringing larger areas into a "state of civilization," the realm of voluntary accords, and the reduction of those areas still in a "state of nature," where every man's hand is against his neighbor, where confidence is unknown and death comes quickly to the weak and unarmed.

No one has seriously proposed a Superstate, which could compel nations to disarm, nor is there any hope of progress in guile. The Treaty of Ghent would long ago have gone to the scrap basket, if either party had suspected trickery or bad faith. Whatever results come out of this Conference will be based on voluntary, open-eyed and loyal agreements.

Those who thought that the diplomats at Paris might contrive a document which would usher in —right after the War—a new era of peace and prosperity, will probably be again disappointed with the Conference at Washington. It is not a matter of phraseology nor clever authorship. Treaties are worthless unless they register an

existing frame of mind. Pledges to reduce armaments, no matter how bedecked with seals, are valueless unless there is real confidence and satisfaction back of them. If the Conference leaves any nation feeling sore, embittered, cheated out of its legitimate interests, it will be a waste of time to read the formal documents. It is altogether too easy for a government to subsidize a mercantile airplane service, capable of bombing a neighboring capital, or to introduce into the schools a course in calisthenics suspiciously like the "goose-step." It is too easy for the private citizen to erect a still under the kitchen stairs to concoct a home-brew of poison gas or high explosive.

All projects for reducing armaments fall flat, unless a basis is established for confidence and good will. Unless a nation is convinced that its vital interests are amply protected by agreement, unless it has been brought voluntarily into such agreement, it will arm.

First of all we must know what each nation considers its "vital interests." Then the problem will be to find out where they conflict and how such conflicts can be accommodated. Each nation must be shown that its own interests are more surely protected by the civilized method of agreement than by the old-fashioned "natural" method of armament.

The fitting of the various interests of half a

dozen nations into a coherent design will prove considerably more difficult than a jig-saw puzzle.

* * *

However, to say that the task before the Conference at Washington is difficult is not to suggest that it is impossible. There is ground for large hopes of real achievements. Much progress has already been made in the substituting of agreement for armament—and not only on this hemisphere.

Perhaps the change in the British attitude towards their Navy is the most striking and hopeful illustration. A few decades ago the English relied solely on their own Fleet for the defense of their large and vital interests at sea. They built a Navy stronger than any possible hostile combination. They changed this policy in signing an Alliance with Japan, whereby their maritime interests in the Pacific were safeguarded by agreement and they could withdraw their naval forces from that sea. The effectiveness of this policy of agreement was proved in the War, when Japanese and not British warships convoyed the Anzac transports.

This example is of especial interest, as the Washington Conference was called primarily to consider naval armaments. Great Britain, the principal sea-power, has shown the way. If agreements can be reached which will convince

the British, the Japanese and Americans that their maritime interests are secure, a general cut in naval programs will be immediately possible.

Next in importance to questions of naval rivalry, the Conference will be occupied with commercial disputes. In this area of conflict, also, Britain has set the example of composing disputes by agreements. Since the days of the Norman Conquest, England and France had been hereditary enemies. The Napoleonic Wars had intensified the ancient hatred. When, after Bismarck had smashed her dream of dominating the Continent, France turned her attention to colonial enterprise, the British resented what seemed like poaching on their private preserves. Frictions and jealousies developed everywhere, from the Newfoundland Fisheries to the heart of Africa and the borders of Siam. The Fashoda Incident brought things to the verge of war. But wiser councils at last prevailed and French and British diplomats began to discuss these colonial wrangles and traders' disputes. Obviously they were small affairs compared to the risk of war, which, whatever its outcome, would leave them both weaker in the face of the growing menace across the Rhine. Once the statesmen realized the common-sense gains of a cordial understanding, it was easy to draw up the necessary documents.

* * *

What man has done, he can do again, and we generally find it possible to improve on past performances. Diplomatic history contains many cases—of which these two examples are illustrations—where nations have secured their vital interests by agreement and have by so much reduced the need of armaments. If there is sufficient will, the diplomats at Washington will find a way. That is the real problem—the question of Will. Inertia, habit, all the old hostilities and distrusts will work against the hoped-for accomplishments. Not much will be done unless a force is developed to override obstacles. In the two examples given above there was an obvious motive—the increasing menace of German ambitions. Will there be so strong a motive at work at Washington? There is today no hostile nation growing so boisterously in power and pretensions.

It is rather the fashion nowadays to cry down idealistic motives. We are told to rely on the “hard head” rather than the “warm heart.” If we cannot reach agreements to reduce armaments for better reasons, perhaps the fear of bankruptcy will drive us to it.

The only force on which we can rely to overcome suspicions and fears is Public Opinion. If the people really want a reduction of armaments and can make their wishes plain—whether they

are inspired by a moral repugnance to war or a thrifty dislike of taxation—they can dictate.

But the first step, before any agreements can be drafted, is to get clear statements of what each nation considers its “vital interests.”

CHAPTER II

AMERICA'S VITAL INTERESTS—TERRITORIAL DEFENSE AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE

ONE interest, which everybody admits is vital for all nations, is the defense of the homeland from hostile invaders. It is a cause for which men have been ready to fight through all ages. It is, with most nations, the principal reason for expenditures on armaments.

We, of the United States, would be just as quick as any other people to arm to the teeth—if we feared attack. Fortunately we are not threatened. Probably at no time in our history have we had less reason to arm on this account.

There is much dispute as to the meaning of some of the events in the late War, but there is small chance of contradiction, if we accept the following points as definitely established:

First, the people of the United States, while slow to anger, will fight when roused with great energy and remarkable unity of spirit. No one is likely to pick a quarrel with us lightly.

Second, the old military maxim, that difficulties increase rapidly with every lengthening of the lines of communication, has been greatly strengthened. As a general rule, the campaigns of the War, which were conducted at a great distance from the base, were fiascos. The decisive fighting took place within a hundred miles of the main depots. We are a long way off from any formidable rival.

Third, no campaign succeeded which depended on landing troops from ships on hostile territory. The only serious attempt was at Gallipoli and that example will not encourage others. Our Expeditionary Force could not have been effective if it had not been for the great depots erected in France. We could not be successfully attacked by an overseas enemy, unless they established a base on this continent. The railroads in Mexico are not adequate for large scale campaigns and the climatic conditions are even more unfavorable. Canada offers the only possible base from which we could be attacked, and we have no reason for fear from that quarter.

Fourth and most important, the War proved that, unless a decision is won quickly, victory is decided by endurance, man-power and material resources. The first defeat of the Germans at the Marne was the deciding factor of the War. Once stopped on their first dash, their chance was

gone. (The only other chance they had was a break-up of the alliance, and in any war of defense we would not have to worry about the defection of allies.) It is hard to imagine any Expeditionary Force large enough, even if it could use Canada as a base, to win a decisive victory quickly. However unprepared we might be at the moment of attack, we are long on endurance, man-power and material resources. Without Canada as a base no serious attack is possible, and even with her the chances of success are too remote to make it attractive to the most hungry coalition. [The scare stories furnished us by the advocates of "Preparedness" in the days before 1917 are rendered ridiculous by the experiences of the War. But of course, when they were talking to us about "defense" in those days, they were really trying to prepare us to take part in a great offensive overseas.

Today we are not threatened by any one. We cannot claim that National Defense is the excuse for our armaments.

* * *

Almost all of our statesmen and publicists have agreed that the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine was also a "vital interest." Unfortunately we have allowed a great deal of uncertainty to grow up and to persist about what we mean by this Doctrine, an uncertainty which has always worked out to our detriment. It has made Euro-

pean Powers unnecessarily jealous, it has made the Latin-American Republics suspicious of our intentions, and of late this same uncertainty has allowed the more enterprising of the Japanese Imperialists to pretend that their Twenty-one Demands on China—now happily repudiated by more responsible opinion in Japan—were simply an attempt to establish a Monroe Doctrine for Asia. It is to be hoped that this Conference at Washington will give our Government the occasion to define, beyond any chance of misunderstanding, just what we mean by this vital interest. We have nothing to gain and much to lose by vagueness.

Historically the matter is clear enough; any one who will read the records can find out what President Monroe had in mind. Successful revolutions had driven Spain from the American mainland. Her colonies had established independent Republics. It was rumored that Spain was appealing to the Holy Alliance for aid in the reconquest of her former possessions. The President in a Message to Congress stated that any attempt of European Governments to extend their political systems on this hemisphere would be regarded by us as an unfriendly act. He did not propose to drive the European Powers out of their remaining colonies on this side of the world. He said that we would resent and resist efforts on their part to establish new colonies or to create

any new spheres of political influence. It is clear that in his mind this question was closely associated with the defense of our own territory. He did not want to see Latin-America "Balkanized." He did not think that it was safe for us to allow states to grow up in the New World which owed allegiance to Europe and whose foreign policy would be dictated by European Prime Ministers.

But Monroe did not declare a Protectorate over the Latin-American Republics. He did not claim for us any special political or economic privileges, or any spheres of influence. He made no suggestion that we would claim a right to close the door of economic opportunity on our commercial rivals.

If the Japanese today should make a declaration that they would resent any attempt on the part of a foreign Power to extend its political control on the continent of Asia and made no claim of special privileges for themselves, they would be doing very much what Monroe did, and for the life of me I cannot see any reason why we should object. But until the Japanese show more respect for their repeated pledges to maintain the Open Door in those parts of China where they have already established themselves they will not be suspected of much sincerity in their talk of an Asiatic Monroe Doctrine.



The meaning, which we put into the Doctrine, has grown beyond Monroe's original intention. When President Cleveland prevented the British from forcibly collecting a debt in Venezuela, he did something that Monroe never dreamed of. And in taking this step, he greatly increased our responsibilities. If we are not going to allow the European Powers to protect their interests in Latin-America in the usual way, we assume a duty to see that their interests are not attacked.

There was also the unfortunate flurry about Magdalena Bay. The excitement, which was stirred up over the wild story that the Japanese were planning to establish a Naval Base in this unsuitable Mexican harbor, has given some grounds for the popular belief, very prevalent in Japan, that we intend to use the Monroe Doctrine to thwart the peaceful enterprise of foreign commerce in Latin-America. There is of course nothing in the recorded thought of Monroe to warrant such action on our part and the Government has never made any such pretension.

Also, there has been much discussion in our papers of late as to whether the reference of a dispute between South American Republics to the arbitrament of a European Tribunal would be an infringement of the famous Doctrine. Here again we can say with certainty that President Monroe never had such a problem in mind. He

was thinking about the preservation of peace in the New World. He would have resented it if some European Power, hoping to gain a political foothold, had tried to mix into a South American dispute uninvited. But he never said anything to raise a doubt as to the full independence of these southern Republics and their right to settle their disputes in their own way. It is only in the last half century that we have wounded the susceptibilities of these Republics by allowing it to appear that we wanted to boss them. Monroe never put forward any such claim.

The Monroe Doctrine—the real essence of which is the prevention of foreign interference in the free political development of Latin-America, an interference which would inevitably trouble the peace of the New World—is as much a vital interest to us now as ever. But like the supreme interest of territorial defense, it is, from the point of view of armament, a dormant issue. Nobody threatens it. And for this there are two reasons.

First of all, the South American Republics, especially the ABC states, have developed sufficient strength to defend their own independence. We do not need to build battleships to keep anybody from trying to make a colony of Argentine. However much the Latin-Americans are inclined to sputter at the overbearing way in which we sometimes discourse on the Monroe Doctrine,

they would each start a Monroe Doctrine of their own—under another name—if any foreign Power attempted to subjugate one of their number.

Secondly, all the rest of the world has come to realize that the results of the Monroe Doctrine have been on the whole very good. It has been generally beneficial that South America has been preserved from the colonial scramble which has made so much havoc in Africa and Asia. At the Peace Conference at Paris, our representatives found no serious opposition from any of the Great Powers to the general acceptance of the Monroe Doctrine. Our "vital interests" in this matter are more securely guarded by such agreements than they would be by any number of battleships.

* * *

These two interests are none the less vital because they are for the moment dormant. We do not vote Army and Navy appropriations to protect our territory from invasion nor to maintain the Monroe Doctrine, because neither of them is threatened. But if unfortunate circumstances should arise, which made us lose confidence, we would arm just as quickly as anybody else. We are not particularly pacific; we are safer. But if our occasional irritations with the British Empire should turn into serious hostility, if Canada showed signs of ill-will and began training large

armies, or if we should have plausible reason to believe that some overseas Power was planning a raid on Latin-America—as Napoleon III. did, when we were utterly distracted by our Civil War—we would not be discussing the limitation of armaments. The price of plough-shares would go up, so many people would be bidding for them, to beat them into swords. If we really were worried there is no reason why we should not shoulder as heavy a military burden as Switzerland. They train all their young men and can mobilize a tenth of their population in forty-eight hours. For us that would mean a prepared army of ten million men.

But we are not seriously worried about either of these vital interests. They are amply protected, partly by distance, partly by such century-old treaties as that of Ghent and by the more recent general recognition of the validity of the Monroe Doctrine, which was won at Paris. They have been removed from the area of distrust into the civilized zone of agreement.

So the problem before our delegates at the Washington Conference will be to see if they can bring our other vital interests into this same zone, arrange agreements with the other Powers, which will inspire such confidence that we will not feel impelled to maintain expensive armaments in their defense.

CHAPTER III

AMERICA'S VITAL INTERESTS—THE FREEDOM OF THE SEAS

Our century-old controversy with Great Britain, about how the seas should be ruled, is a fundamental issue in any discussion of Naval Armaments.] If it does not figure on the Agenda at the Washington Conference, it will be because some agreement—tacit or formal—has been reached before the Conference opens. Just as the Japanese would prefer to settle the wrangle over the Island of Yap by “direct negotiations,” rather than in “full conference,” so there would be advantages, both to Britain and to us, if this cause of irritation could be removed before the questions, in which we hope to work together, come before the delegates. Some sort of a *modus vivendi* may already have been reached, which will avoid the embarrassment of a public discussion of this family dispute.

But to ignore the issue would simply be hiding our heads in the sand. Always our statesmen

have considered this matter a "vital interest," and from time to time, when some incident has brought it to the front page of our newspapers, public opinion has rallied to their support. Like the Monroe Doctrine, it is a subject we do not often think about, but whenever events force it to our attention, we think about it intensely and with considerable heat. We broke off diplomatic relations with France when Napoleon's "continental blockade" interfered with our rights at sea. We fought the War of 1812 on the same issue. It was in defense of these rights that we smashed the Barbary Pirates. And it was what happened to our citizens at sea in 1914-15-16 that brought the Great War home to us and finally forced us to take sides against Germany. The importance of the matter has varied with us from decade to decade. In our early days, when our clipper ships traded in all the Seven Seas, the greatest part of our wealth was ocean borne, but the winning of the West distracted our attention from the sea for several generations. Now we are once more building up a merchant marine. We cannot be indifferent to the law which rules the sea.

We had best give up the phrase: "The Freedom of the Seas." The Germans ruined it by appropriating it during the War and using it in a sense definitely hostile to the British. It is to be hoped that our diplomats will find some other phrase,

which will not sound as if it had been made in Germany and which will make clear to our friends in England just what we are driving at. If they understand what we mean, it will no longer seem dreadful to them.

What is the issue in this old controversy? What do we want? Can it be reconciled with the "vital interests" of Britain? It is of primary importance that our Government should make the American contention entirely plain—not only plain, but also acceptable.

Much bitter opposition to the League of Nations has been based on the erroneous idea that it would be a Superstate, demanding a surrender of sovereignty from its members. There is nothing to warrant such a fear, but some of the Republican Senators have been especially eloquent about this imaginary danger, so we may be sure that no machinery will be established at Washington which will have the power to *compel* a sovereign nation to sacrifice what it considers its "vital interests" on behalf of cosmopolitan welfare. This Conference can accomplish nothing except on the basis of voluntary agreement. If we are not convinced that our interests on the seas are adequately protected by agreement, we must either give up going to sea or build warships to defend our rights. On the other hand, if our proposals seem to the British to endanger

their "vital interests" they will not accept them and the competition in Naval Armaments will continue.

A solution of this problem would be a tremendous step towards general disarmament, a necessary first step. If the Anglo-Saxon peoples, speaking the same language, are so distrustful of each other that they must arm to the teeth, there is no ground for querulous surprise that the Greeks and the Turks are in the market for more guns.

Fortunately there is every reason to believe that a mutually satisfactory arrangement can be reached with Britain. In these days of aircraft, the Atlantic is hardly wider than the Great Lakes were in 1814, when we signed the Treaty of Ghent and disarmed along the Canadian frontier. We signed that treaty with Britain, immediately after a bitter war, in which we had sunk a good many of her ships and in which she had burned our capital. Now we are to meet again to discuss the reduction of armaments, but this time right after a greater war, in which we have fought as comrades. What was possible in a small way, when we were angry, ought now to be feasible on a larger scale. Surely there is nothing so dreadful in salt water, that, while we need nothing but police boats on the lakes, we must have war fleets on the ocean.



The dispute has to do with the rights of neutrals during naval warfare. Since Piracy was abolished, the seas have been free in time of peace. The citizen of any nation could go about his business on the ocean, unarmed and without fear of arbitrary interference. He could know just what his rights were. But the outbreak of war at sea immediately ends all that sense of ordered security which is the essence of freedom. Sailor folk, when they fight, do it in a "natural" and unrestrained way. They strike so hard at their enemies that, quite as often as not, they destroy people who have not the remotest interest in their quarrel. It is this injury to innocent neutrals which has caused protest.

No one has much sympathy for the non-combatant, who is not really neutral, who is helping actively one belligerent against the other, but, due allowance being made for this class of false neutrals, there is always a large bulk of sea commerce which is in no way involved in the issues of the war. History shows only too plainly that, in the absence of any generally accepted Law of the Seas, what the neutrals claim as their rights is not worth writing down on paper.

The great loss to neutrals in a naval war is not so much due to the confiscation of their cargoes, nor the occasional sinking of their ships, as it is to uncertainty. They do not know, from day to day, what they can safely consider their

rights. That will be determined for them, without consulting them, as the fighting develops. The belligerent who comes out on top will—on the basis of Might and his own convenience—announce to the nations what he is pleased to consider International Law. No neutral ship-owner can accept a charter with any certainty, because a cargo which is on the free list today may be declared contraband after he puts to sea. No neutral business man can rely on a contract which involves an overseas transaction. Maritime insurance and freight rates soar to a point of practical blockade, upsetting all the normal processes of commerce.

It is this uncertainty against which we have always protested. Once war is declared all idea of freedom based on the stability of law disappears. The belligerent who wins control of the seas twists International Law to suit his purpose and the neutral must bow to the Rule of Force. During the Anglo-French Wars of 1793 to 1814, each belligerent—just as our interests were trampled on by both sides in the Great War—issued edict after edict, destroying one after another the time-honored and accustomed rights of neutral commerce. To be sure each of these edicts was justified as a “reprisal” against the illegal actions of the other belligerent. But the bizarre idea, that innocent neutrals should be

punished for the wrong-doings of an enemy, became so vexatious that we broke off diplomatic relations with France and declared war on England.

This tendency to ignore the rights of others, when yourself engaged in war, is not confined to any one nation. We also have been offenders. In the Civil War we invented innovations in the Rules of Blockade—the Doctrine of Continuous Voyage—just as recklessly denying what the neutrals called their rights, as the British had done with their “Orders in Council,” or Napoleon with his “continental blockade.”

In the Russo-Japanese War, for the first time in history, Russia put foodstuff—rice—on her contraband list. The United States and Great Britain protested, and, as we had overpowering navies, the Government of the Tsar thought better of it and removed the ban from foodstuff.

There is no generally accepted Law of Naval Warfare; there are only a number of vague precedents, of which the clearest is that the nation which controls the sea can do just about what it pleases. As there is no code which all nations have voluntarily agreed to respect, each nation when it becomes a belligerent interprets—or ignores—the precedents as it sees fit. The result is uncertainty and inevitable loss, that falls more

heavily on those who keep the peace than on those who break it.

* * *

Although the British Government came very near to agreeing with us on the advisability of having a general agreement on the Law of the Sea, in the years just before the War, in the negotiations regarding the Declaration of London, they at last refused to ratify it. Perhaps one reason why we have never been able to make the British quite see our point in this matter is that they have suffered less than we or other nations, when trying to maintain neutral rights during a naval conflict. Always they have had their great fleet, holding the balance of power, and, no matter how desperately angry the belligerents might be at each other, they would take care to fire in the other direction when a British ship sailed by. During the Civil War, we stretched the Law of the Sea to the detriment of neutral shipping, not as far as we could but as far as we dared. When one of our overzealous naval officers stopped the British ship "Trent" and took off two agents of the Confederacy, Lincoln wisely decided that discretion was the better part of valor and handed them back to the British with due apologies. If the British Navy had joined forces with the South, as they threatened, the hopes of the Union would

have been over. But there is small reason to believe that we would have given up these two gentlemen if the nation which was protesting on their behalf had not had a navy.

In any sea war, neutral commerce is bound to suffer, but the nation with the largest fleet suffers least, and British merchantmen have on the whole—notably in the Franco-Prussian War—been treated with considerably more respect than those of weaker nations. This makes it the more striking, that of all the international jurists who have argued on behalf of the rights of neutral commerce, Englishmen have been the most eloquent. Some of the best quotations in support of the American contention are to be found in the official British Blue Books.

Although this is striking, it is not surprising. Great Britain has not only a great navy, but also the largest mercantile marine afloat and, since the fall of Napoleon, she has for more than a century been neutral in all the great naval wars. During this hundred years of neutrality, her main interest was the protection of peaceful commerce on the seas. In the long run, unless new wars are to be frequent, British interests will inevitably turn again in this direction.

However, in 1914, the habit of British neutrality was broken, the policy which she had developed in the long years of peace was forgotten

and she turned back to the Napoleonic Era for precedents. His Majesty's Privy Council began issuing Orders after the old manner, inventing new forms of blockade under new names, adding new items to the contraband list. It was rather like a thrilling serial in a weekly publication, the instalments came rapidly and each one had for its climax some new interference with neutral rights. Protests from Washington and other neutral capitals were just as frequent. But from the point of view of one who likes a good argument, the correspondence was spoiled by Germany. With amazing stupidity, she never allowed the indignation of the neutrals against these British innovations to boil over. Just as we were getting very heated over some new "Order in Council," Germany distracted our attention with a crime. Controversies over commercial rights sank into insignificance when the "Lusitania" went down.

If it were not all so tragic there would be an element of slapstick farce in the record of our effort to maintain an unbiased neutrality during the first years of the War. First Jack stepped on our toes. As we demanded an apology, Johann kicked us in the ribs. We were preparing to challenge him to a duel, when Jack slapped us in the face. And so it went. A few days after the "Sussex" was torpedoed, when feeling was running high against Germany, a Reply to one

of our Notes arrived from London, which no one can read today without the conviction that the British Cabinet, by deliberate tactlessness, sought to cool our growing ardor for the Cause of the Entente. If we had been determined to defend our rights at sea rigorously, we would have had to declare war on both sides.

* * *

As all this controversy is caused by the distress of neutrals in times of war, it is obvious that the simplest way out of the difficulty would be some scheme to insure peace. But it is because we have refused to take part in the League of Nations—the only scheme as yet suggested to prevent war—that it has been necessary to summon this special Conference at Washington. Until there is some organization of the nations, which has gathered sufficient strength to give general confidence in the stability of peace, all maritime nations will consider the protection of their rights at sea a “vital interest.” Unless we can safeguard them by agreement we will have to depend for their defense on armament.

A reading of the arguments made by American representatives at the various International Conferences, where the Law of the Sea has been discussed, naturally shows considerable variation in regard to detail, but a clear consistency on the fundamental. We have always maintained that

the law of the seas, like our Anglo-Saxon law on land, should be based on the consent of those to be governed by it. That is the meaning we have put in the phrase: the Freedom of the Seas. Secure Freedom, based on an established Code of Law, to which all maritime nations are bound by voluntary agreement, a stable statute, which will make clear to all their rights and duties—such freedom from arbitrary interference as we are accustomed to under the Law of the Land. At present, we have a state of anarchy at sea as soon as war is declared. We do not know what we are free to do, until one belligerent has won control of the seas and has decreed, on the basis of Might, what the "law" shall be for the rest of us.

Any one, trained in legal lore, will find the argument stated at length in the case of the steamship "Zamora," in which a British Prize Court in 1916 sustained our contention that the Privy Council, which is a purely British body, could not create International Law.

A better illustration for the layman is found in the controversy over "bunker coal." We were not a party to this dispute, as it lay between Britain and the European neutrals. An old maxim of International Law, accepted without demur by the British Prize Courts, was that things "needful for the working of the ship or the comfort of the crew" could not be treated as contra-

band. But suddenly a British Order in Council put "coal, of enemy origin," on the contraband list. No ship, with German coal in its bunkers, was safe from seizure outside of the Baltic.

From our, American, point of view, it is a mere detail whether or not coal should be classed as contraband, but we maintain that a well-established rule of International Law cannot be changed by any one nation to suit its convenience of the moment. When all the text-books on International Law say that the nations have agreed that things needful for the working of the ship are free from suspicion of contraband, a sea captain has a right to believe it. He has a right to take on bunker coal wherever he wants to, and neither Britain nor Germany nor we have a right to treat it as prize. We are interested, not so much in the contents of the Sea Code, as in its nature and source. If everybody else thinks that bunker coal should be on the contraband list, we have no objection. Our main contention is that the Sea Code—whatever is written into it, and whatever amendments may from time to time be necessary—should be based on conference and agreement. The Rules of Sea Warfare must be determined either by the nation with the strongest navy, or, if it is to deserve the name of International Law, it must be based on agreement among the nations. In the first case we will have

to keep our navy polished. In the second case, we have always been ready to pledge our honor to observe the rules to which we have agreed with scrupulous punctilio.

* * *

There is a possibility of making a "detour" around this difficult problem, along some by-road of temporary and makeshift compromise. There has been some discussion, for instance, of equality between the two navies. This would in theory give us just as good a chance as the British to tie knots in International Law. But the ingenuity of Naval Constructors would always be tempted to upset the balance. There will be no way of getting around the difficulty, which will prove as permanently satisfactory as facing it frankly and removing it.

If the Conference at Washington reaches permanent and satisfying results, it will be by working out methods of friendly coöperation, which will gradually allay distrusts and build up cordial understandings, giving to each nation such confidence in the other's spirit of fair play, such assurance that each will respect the other's "vital interests" on the seas, that it becomes obviously foolish to go on wasting money on Naval Competition. If suspicion can be conquered, there will be a race in disarmament.

If we and the British can trust each other on Lake Erie, why not on the Atlantic?

CHAPTER IV

AMERICA'S VITAL INTERESTS—THE OPEN DOOR

WHEN John Hay wrote his first Notes about The Open Door Policy in the Far East, he did not claim that this matter was for us at that time a "vital interest," but he believed that inevitably it would become one. Every year's statistics brings new evidence of the growing importance of Oriental trade. The present Administration is insistent in protecting our commercial opportunities in all the former enemy territories, now held under Mandate. It has made the security of American investments the basis of its discussions with Mexico. It has protested to the Netherlands against discrimination in regard to oil in the Dutch East Indies. It is not likely to weaken in regard to the Open Door in China.

John Hay had other values in mind beside the trade balance. He saw that the only hope for China was to stop the scramble for spheres of influence and concession, which was tearing the Celestial Empire to pieces. The gains from this

scramble were loot, rather than profits. They went, not to the most industrious, but to the least scrupulous. They were secured by bribes and bullying, not by service. Looting brings high dividends while it lasts, but it is only another name for killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. What was going on in China was a disgrace to Western Civilization. And Hay's attempt to establish the principle of the Open Door was inspired by the hope of stopping a crime, not by a desire to share in the spoils.

Besides our interest in foreign trade, there is great sympathy for China in this country, a strong desire to protect her from spoliation, so there is little doubt that this Administration would be supported by a united public opinion in insisting that the maintenance of the Open Door is one of our vital interests. It is striking that many of those leaders of opinion—public speakers and newspaper editors—who have been most vociferous in warning us against any Trans-Atlantic commitments, think it quite natural that we should take "a strong stand" in protecting China and the Open Door in the Far East. The farther West you go beyond the Mississippi, the more often you encounter people, opposed to our taking any risks on behalf of peace in Europe, who are quite ready to rush—Quixotically—to arms on behalf of China—and trade opportunities.

It certainly would be fine, if we could secure China against further encroachments and persuade everybody to live up to the pledges they have given about preserving equality of trade opportunities. But the hard thing is to do it.

Some wise man has said that the difference between an expert and a layman, is that the expert understands the difficulties. Almost everybody in New York City has wished for a bridge across the Hudson. But the experts talked about the difficulties, cost, etc. Now we are told that at last the bridge is to be built. The experts have overcome the difficulties—the most important of which we, laymen, never realized.

So it is with these thorny problems across the Pacific. Those of us who have spent a few weeks in the Orient as tourists have seen one of the difficulties—the terrifying pressure of the birth rate on the food supply. The more one studies the problem, the more difficulties are discovered.

Like the Anglo-Irish situation, like our own troubled relations with Mexico, like so discouragingly many international problems, it is easier to assess past blame than to find a present solution. We have to begin work in the middle of a mess. Any lad can keep a new stable decent, but it took Hercules to clean up those of Augeas.

The experts have not yet found a way to overcome the difficulties in the Far East. That will

be the principal task of the Conference at Washington.

* * *

A letter came to hand the other day, from a man who formerly had unusual opportunity for studying the Diplomacy of the Far East. It was very illuminating on some of these difficulties.

"I haven't any information on what the Japanese are planning to do at this Conference," he wrote, "but I am willing to risk a prophecy on the line they will take. All they need, if they want to raise a cloud of embarrassment, is a little logic.

"Their enemies sometimes accuse them of being merely imitators and certainly in their diplomacy they are great on precedent. When they get in bad, it is because they have followed a bad precedent. And we have furnished them plenty of bad ones. They will have learned from the history of former Conferences that the nation which allows itself to be put on the defensive in such discussions always comes off badly. They will search for a precedent on how to take the offensive.

"They will find just what they want in the Conference of Algeciras. You remember that Germany insisted on that Conference to protect the Sultan of Morocco from the aggressive designs of France. Well, the French Delegation, at the very first session, took the wind out of the German

sails by suggesting that all accept, as a basis for the discussion, a pledge to maintain the political sovereignty of the Sultan, the territorial integrity of his realm and the principle of equal trade opportunities. There was nothing left to discuss but details. After the Conference disbanded, France proceeded to depose the Sultan, divide up his realm and close the door on competitive commerce—our own American commerce included. Not a pretty precedent, you will say? No. But it was effective and just the kind of precedent the Japanese follow with such touching fidelity.

“The Japanese will arrive at Washington with their well-known and somewhat exaggerated smile, and my bet is that, at the first opportunity, they will ask permission to read a proposal for the peaceful settlement of the Far Eastern problems. In a very high moral tone, they will contend that the security of China, freed from the exploitation of foreign concessionaires, its independence and territorial integrity guaranteed by international pledges, is the dearest wish of Japan. Of next importance, in their opinion, will be the rigorous application of the policy of John Hay in regard to the Open Door. Japan would be ready to welcome any coöperation in such measures to insure the peace and prosperity of the East. She would be glad to abandon all her pretensions to special interests within the historic frontiers of

China, as soon as the other Powers were ready to do likewise. Indeed, the value of Japan's concessions are very modest compared to the colony which France has cut out for herself in Indo-China. She could well afford to cancel her spheres of influence in Manchuria and Mongolia, if the British would do the same in Hong Kong and Thibet.

"As a further pledge of their sincerity, they may propose to tear down the tariff barriers in Formosa and Korea, if we will do the same in the Philippines and Alaska. They could present quite an argument about the injustice of our excluding their trade from the Aleutian Islands, which are so much nearer to their territory than to Seattle.

"Of course," he wrote, "I do not believe that the Japanese Delegation will be quite as ironical as this, but I do think that this will be their general line of attack. Why shouldn't they? They are coming here reluctantly. They do not know how far they can trust the British. They are mightily worried about an Anglo-Saxon trap. And logic is their trump card.

"Anybody who thinks that a naughty Japan is to be brought before the bar of a virtuous Christendom is counting without his—guest. What do we accuse Japan of? Annexing Korea? We annexed the Philippines. France carved a colony out of China. The missionaries accuse Japan of

drugging the Chinese, smuggling in cocaine. Is cocaine so much worse than opium? Japan has violated her pledges about the Open Door in Manchuria? Guilty. But has France kept her pledges in Morocco? No. The only charge you can substantiate against the Japanese Foreign Office is the consistency with which it always follows the worst Christian precedent.

"It makes the Japanese mad to be called the Prussians of the Orient, but there is much truth in it. A good many of them are spiritually walking down Wilhelmstrasse—the road to destruction. I think that the Japanese are in bad, have taken the wrong trail and all that, but it would be naïve folly to pretend that they are the only offenders.

"If there isn't a general change in direction out there in the East, there will be a terrible smash. Although I'm sure that the Conference will be a bitter farce, if it is run on any holier-than-thou basis, I have great hopes. Remember that the Japanese are having a hard time, too; they are just as much perplexed about the future as we. If we really try to help them to firmer ground, we have a wonderful opportunity to regain their friendship."

This letter is typical, in its contrast between the cynical despair of traditional diplomacy and the growing hope for finer International Relations,

of all serious modern discussion of such matters. If the Japanese open an attack along the lines he suggests, it will be hard to answer them. But it would be ill-advised for them to do so. It would show that they have no share in the hope for real settlements based on mutual satisfaction and good will; that their object was to raise a smoke screen behind which they might retreat without loss of face. But all the world would see through so retrogressive a manœuvre and no nation today can find a source of pride in having blocked the progress towards peace, so ardently desired by all the world. The nation which is most modest in its claims, most sympathetic to the interests of others—raises the fewest objections and most frequently makes conciliatory suggestions—will win the palms at this Conference.

* * *

The most delicate task before the American Delegation will be the defining of what are our “vital interests” in the Far East. Even if it is not written down and given out to the newspapers, the definition will have to be thought out. Certainly we would like to see all the foreign Powers give up their oppressive and disruptive claims to “spheres of influence” in China. Is it a vital interest for the defense of which we must arm? Are we prepared to be just as insistent in talking to Great Britain and France as to Japan? Cer-

tainly we would like to see the Open Door a reality. Are we ready to apply the principle to our own dependencies, or is it a rule which we like when it favors us and which we refuse to discuss when it works against us?

Necessarily the refrain of all these articles is that the Conference on the Limitation of Armaments will get us nowhere, unless it results in voluntary agreements. It is not enough to formulate a policy of the Open Door in China which seems just to us. We are not law-givers to the world. Japan cannot be expected to agree wholeheartedly to our proposals, unless she is convinced that they protect her vital interests quite as much as ours.

Our controversy with Britain over the Freedom of the Seas seems much more easy of settlement than the reconciling of the interests of Japan and the United States in the Far East. In spite of Messrs. Hearst and Bottomley, almost everybody in England and America wants a settlement. There has been more heated and more voluminous efforts to make trouble on both sides of the Pacific.

But those who talk glibly of inevitable conflict, who quote Mr. Kipling about the East being East and the West, West, should read the verse from which they quote clear through. The East and the West are going to meet at Washington. And

all those from all the ends of the earth, who pray for Peace, will pray that they meet as brave men should, fearlessly, earnestly and with clear speech.

We will not help along the cause of Peace if we fall into the sins of vainglory and self-righteousness. Japan will not help along, if she comes in with some cunning insincerity—however well precedented—to confuse the issues. But if both nations are brave enough to be frank, confident enough to be conciliatory—not afraid of seeming weak—there is room to hope that the Pacific Ocean may continue to deserve its attractive name.

CHAPTER V

THE VITAL INTERESTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

It is always a delicate, thankless task to define the interests of other people, but fortunately the British can speak for themselves in our common language. They have written an immense amount on the subject of their vital interests. Also most of us have the opportunity to talk it over with English friends. Almost all that has been said on this subject can be reduced to one word—Sea.

The irrefutable logic of geological formation makes this inevitably the major interest of the British. It is the heaving of volcanic forces, the crumpling of the earth's crust, rather than any choice on their part, which has determined this matter. They are an Island folk.

Civilization came to Britain, with Cæsar, from overseas. Her prosperity has always come from overseas trade. Her Empire is overseas.

England was the first country to get caught in the industrial revolution. The application of steam to manufacture, the development of the factory system, immensely intensified production.

The effect was the same in England as that we are now watching in Japan—an increase in population, rapidly outrunning the native food supply. Production in England, under this new system, also quickly surpassed the consumptive power of the home markets. So two necessities developed simultaneously, each one partly the cause and partly the effect of the other. It was necessary to find foreign markets to which the surplus production of the factories could be exported. It was equally necessary to find foreign markets where food could be bought for import, and not food only. It was just as important to feed the maw of the machine as to find food for the people. Raw material—cotton, metals, rubber—had to be bought abroad and the only way to pay for them was by exporting manufactured goods. And all of these foreign markets lay across the seas.

It was fortunate for Britain that she was the first of the nations to be caught by the Industrial Revolution. There was still much room in the world. She already had a large overseas domain, built up on the colonial system of the 18th Century. It was relatively easy for her to consolidate her position in the most favorable foreign markets.

Her Empire also proved of value in another way, perhaps equally important. It furnished a reservoir into which she could pour her surplus population. The colonies and especially the

Dominions acted as a safety valve, automatically establishing a minimum wage. If life became too hard in the industrial centers, there was always a chance to emigrate to some British land of more promising opportunities. Just as the Winning of the West has left deep imprints on our national life, so the development of the Dominions has played a rôle of great importance in the British Empire.

For the nations, which became industrialized later, it was much more difficult to find a place in the sun. The forces urging to expansion were just as powerful, but all the best fields for expansion were already occupied. This presented a problem to Germany that was too much for her to solve. In impatience she tried to cut the Gordian Knot—what she called “encirclement”—by the sword. Japan is now faced by the same problem. And this Conference on the Limitation of Armaments will be meaningless, unless it succeeds in finding some peaceful way for Japan to solve it.

Pastoral philosophers may argue that it would have been better for the British if they had never become industrialized. They might have been happier if they had been content with the rôle of an insignificant group of islands, where the people plowed and sowed, shepherded flocks, clad themselves in the products of Arts-Craft looms, and

for recreation wrote immortal verse. But the English never had the chance to make a choice between such a William Morris Arcadia and the grim unloveliness of the Five Towns. They were in the grip of what the Germans call the "*Zeitgeist*." Now they cannot turn back. And in this kind of a civilization, which the Spirit of our Times has created, British interests at sea are not a matter of more or less profits, but of Life or Death.

It makes no difference what sort of a Britisher you talk to, you will find the conviction bred in his bones that the fate of the nation lies on the sea, that Britons will very soon be slaves if any other Power rules the waves. So long as they have any energy left, of brain or muscle or purse, they will use it to protect themselves from this menace. They will buy security at whatever it costs—but of course they want to get it as cheaply as possible.

Up till the turn of the century, Britain, in her Splendid Isolation, relied solely on her own navy for the protection of her interests on the seas. She built fleets powerful enough to give her mastery against any possible combination of hostile nations. This arrangement had certain obvious advantages, but its cost became more and more oppressive. Among other things which the progress of science has done for our generation

has been to multiply and multiply the expensiveness of arms. The entire Spanish Armada, probably all the ships Nelson ever commanded, did not cost so much as one modern Super-Dreadnaught.

As the tax burden incident to Ruling the Waves increased beyond reason, British statesmen began to look around for partners with whom to share the responsibility. The Japanese Alliance was the first step in this new policy. It protected, and amply protected, British interests in the Pacific. The next step was the Naval Agreement with France, whereby they took over the protection of British interests in the Mediterranean and allowed the concentration of the Grand Fleet in the North Seas.

During this period—1900-1914—the British Government, more than once, sounded us out, to see if we would come in on the combination. It seems that we generally pretended not to understand what they meant.

The War tested this new policy and proved that it was good, for the French and Japanese Navies coöperated with the British in accordance with the agreement. But the War also proved once more—and so vividly that no Englishman who lived through the critical winter of 1917-18 will ever forget—how utterly Britain could be defeated if an enemy could close against her the

sea routes on which her life depends. German submarines came within measurable distance of doing it. Every Britisher knows that his Empire cannot survive a war in which it is overpowered at sea.

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Our proposal for a generally accepted Sea Code, which would assure the Freedom of the Sea, has never been agreed to by the British. It has not seemed to them to guarantee them sufficient protection. Here as elsewhere, the great obstacle is distrust. We have refused to give any formal assurances that our fleet would not be used against them. We have ignored several overtures. It was our Senate, not Parliament, which refused to ratify the General Arbitration Treaty.

Then there is the more generalized distrust that comes from the realization that, when people are fighting for their lives, it is hard for them to remember the promises they have given in cool blood. Of course, if there were some "organized major force," ready to bring pressure to bear on any nation which violated its International Agreements, it would be easier—but this Conference at Washington has been rendered necessary because we were not willing to go into such an arrangement.

So the British have some justification in being shy of our proposed Freedom of the Seas. It

demands a curtailment of their privileges and no very definite assurances from us. They are accustomed to ruling the waves, and have found it pleasant. When other people fell out, they could cruise around the outskirts of the fray and prevent any innovations in International Law which threatened their commercial interests; and on the rare occasions when they were drawn into the conflict, the strength of their navy made the weaker neutrals humble and respectful in talking about their "rights" when the Privy Council invented some new interpretation of old precedents. Any one is naturally reluctant to abandon so privileged a position. But the British, finding it a terribly costly luxury, have discovered how to reduce the expense by means of Agreements, first with Japan in the Pacific and then with France in regard to the Mediterranean. They are now seeking an agreement with us.

For a while the British hoped that the League of Nations would solve the whole difficulty. If a more civilized method of protecting national interests at sea should win general confidence, nobody would waste money on battleships. But what hope there was in the League, from the point of view of ending naval competition, was ruined by our refusal to participate. The one nation which seriously threatened British safety at sea stayed out of the general agreement to

prevent war and accepted a naval program which, if it were not answered by intensified building in England, would soon leave them a poor second.

We are all trying to get into the frame of mind in which we will feel safe in reducing our armaments, so it would be worse than useless to recount the old irritations, the tactless threats, which goaded the last Administration into laying the foundation of our present building program. We want to forget all that if we can. The disturbing fact is that the British, feeling very intensely that their safety depends on at least equality with any other Naval Power, which might become hostile, find our attempt to outbuild them inexplicable, mysterious and therefore threatening. These Dreadnaughts that we are building are not toy ships; they are dangerous—to somebody—to whom?

From the point of view of all the nations which have entered into a Covenant to prevent Wars, this navy of ours is outlaw. Not only the English but all the world is asking, "Against whom are the Americans building?"

If we maliciously wanted to make the British and Japanese nervous and suspicious we could not find a better way to do it. If we are not spending all this money for fun—just to hear it rattle as it runs away—it must be against one or both of them. Under the spell of the old traditions of

diplomacy, there would be nothing for Britain to do in the circumstance but to increase her own expenditures to the limit and strengthen her Alliances against us.

Fortunately, Lloyd George has been unwilling to accept the idea that a quarrel is inevitable. He has decided on at least one more try at an agreement. As a result of the Conference of Dominion Premiers, he has publicly proposed an Anglo-American-Japanese Triple Alliance. It is uncertain whether such an agreement is advisable, it is uncertain whether our public opinion would accept it. But the offer has been made this time so earnestly, so publicly, that we cannot pretend not to understand what it means.

If our refusal to join the League is final and if we decide to reject this offer, we must present some counter-proposal which will be acceptable to the British and Japanese or there is no use wasting time discussing the limitation of armaments—nobody will believe that we want it. If we cannot agree to anything, if we are going to reject every proposal whether it is originated by ourselves or by others, we had best settle down at once without further palaver to outbuild the Anglo-Japanese combination.

That is the serious phase of this Conference. If it does not succeed, the failure will be appalling. Once you begin to discuss mutual jealousies and

distrusts, you must allay them or they will become more acute than ever.

Two proposals for the Limitation of Naval Armaments have already been accepted in principle by the British—the League of Nations and a Triple Alliance of Britain, the United States and Japan. If we really want to decrease this hideous burden of armaments, we cannot reject both of them unless we have an acceptable counter-proposal to offer. The British have shown their willingness to meet us in some agreement. So, if the Conference should break down on this point, the world will put the responsibility on us.

CHAPTER VI

THE VITAL INTERESTS OF JAPAN—ECONOMIC

WE are less familiar with the history and current thought of Japan than we are in the case of our Trans-Atlantic cousins. We cannot read their newspapers and do not often have the opportunity to discuss the issues with them in friendly conversation.

However, there are certain broad considerations, governing their thinking about the vital interests of their country, which all who wish can understand. This is more especially true in regard to their economic interests.

In so many ways their situation is similar to that of the British. Geological evolution has arranged for them an Island home. They are a little better off in regard to food than the British as a larger proportion of their people are still engaged in agriculture. Their industrialism, with its trend away from the farms to the factory sites, is still young. But from the point of view of raw material, they are much worse off than the

British. They have little coal, no fuel oil and very little mineral. Their factories must be fed almost entirely from overseas. Their Industrialism is developing rapidly, producing much more commodities than can be consumed at home and which must be sold abroad, drawing ever more people into the towns and cities, who must be fed with imported foodstuffs, making not only the prosperity, but the very life of the nation, more and more dependent on regular, uninterrupted overseas trade.] When the War caused the shortage of shipping and freight rates soared, there were immediate and disastrous rice riots in Japan. An effective blockade would starve them into submission just as quickly as the English.

Japan has less responsibilities in the way of distant colonies than Britain, but, while this may be considered as somewhat reducing her needs in Naval Armaments, it is far from an unmixed blessing, for it makes her foreign markets, both for import and export, less secure, and she has no sparsely settled dominions to absorb her surplus population.

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The most difficult problem to judge, which faces Japan, is this matter of her rapidly increasing population. There is no other important phase of sociology, about which we know less, to

which we have devoted less study, than the birth rate. Generally, but not always, the development of an Industrial Epoch has stimulated population. It did in England, it did in Germany. But it has not done so in France. Italy is not so highly industrialized as Belgium, but the exuberance of her birth rate causes her more worry. The Russians, who are hardly industrialized at all, have been increasing in numbers tremendously. And as we do not know what causes these periods of sudden increase in the birth rate, we do not know how long they will last. Almost every European nation, where statistics are available, has gone through recurrent cycles of great prolificness and relative sterility. Spain, for instance, once had a period when her population broke the bonds of her narrow frontiers and surged out to the uttermost corners of the world. Nobody pretends to know what stopped it. Perhaps there is some "law" of population, but if so we have not yet deciphered it. Hardly any serious attention has been given to the subject, since Malthus wrote his pessimistic essay on Population so many years ago.

So we cannot be sure that the present excess of births over deaths will continue indefinitely in Japan, but the last fifty years has seen a very rapid increase in the number of inhabitants. From a Western point of view, the Islands are

already terribly over-populated. If this tendency continues for a few decades, an explosive force will be generated, which it is difficult to estimate or overestimate. For the Japanese cannot emigrate.

Close at hand is the vast continent of Asia, but it is already densely populated and its inhabitants are habituated to a lower standard of living than that of Japan. The movement of migrations is always in the opposite direction—towards opportunities of improving conditions. No one wants to leave his familiar countryside and seek his fortune in a foreign land, unless he has a reasonable prospect of bettering himself. All the Government-encouraged projects of Japanese emigration to their colonies and spheres of influence in Asia have failed dismally. There has been no large scale movement of Japanese settlers to the colony of Formosa. The percentage of Japanese residents in Korea has grown only very slowly since the Annexation. And it appears that the Japanese colonists in Manchuria are losing ground before Chinese immigration. They cannot compete successfully with native labor on the continent.

If you reverse this proposition, you have the explanation of why the Japanese cannot migrate to the countries where the conditions are more favorable.

There is so great a difference between the standards of the Orientals and the Anglo-Saxons that Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States have been forced in self-defense to exclude them. Just as the Japanese laborer cannot live in competition with Chinese or Korean coolies, so our labor cannot maintain its accustomed standards in competition with them.

The Japanese, who would like to emigrate, find that they cannot earn a decent living in the countries to which they are free to go and that they are excluded from the countries where they could hope to better themselves. "The number of Japanese abroad is far less than is the *net increase* in population every six months." This quotation from an essay by Walter Weyl, "Japan's Thwarted Emigration," presents the whole problem with great vividness. The only way for the Japanese statesmen to care for this rapidly growing population—these extra citizens—is to create new jobs where they can earn enough to pay for imported food. If they cannot check the production of babies, they must intensify the production of commodities and find markets for them abroad.

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Taxation is another very serious problem for Japan. As in many other phases of governmental organization, Japan was able to benefit by the

experience of others. Her Constitution is not a growth like that of most of the Western countries. Her break with her old traditions of feudalism was sudden and sweeping, and the statesmen who planned her present Constitution had studied all our experiments in government. They did not copy any one Western Government; they tried to take the best from each and adopt it to their own needs. Many students of economy have said that they were especially successful in their tax legislation, successful, that is, from the point of view of raising the largest possible national revenue. But on the whole her people are poor and it seems that she has reached the limit of taxation. The only way she can hope to increase the income of the government—if indeed she is able to maintain her present military and naval expenditures—is by profitable enterprises abroad, by increasing her industrial wealth through building more factories or by the increased custom receipts from a growing import trade.

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There is no possible way for Japan to take care of her expanding population or to increase her tax-yielding wealth unless she has large and assured supplies of raw materials from abroad. The industries for which she is traditionally famous do not lend themselves to large scale production. Silk is almost the only specifically

Oriental product which Japan can largely increase. Modern industry depends on the fabrication of the products of fuel and minerals, and of these basic materials she has almost none.

Just across narrow straits, hardly wider than those which separate England from the Continent, is the mainland of Asia. Most of the pearls and precious stones, the wrought gold and lacquer, the perfumes and spices, which made the name of "Cathay" alluring when Marco Polo was young, have been already snatched up, but the ancient realm of the Great Khan still holds wealth incalculable in such unromantic things as coal and oil and mineral ores. The riches which were carried away on camel caravans and in the sailing ships of "the British Company, trading in the East Indies" were only children's baubles compared to the value of subsoil deposits which could be dug up with steam shovels and moved in unlovely trains of flat cars. And all this raw wealth, which Japan needs so urgently to keep her people alive, is ignored and neglected by those who "own" it.

All the mining, railroad and industrial development of China has been done neither by, nor for the benefit of, the Chinese, but by foreign "concessionaires"—more foreign and from more distant homes than the Japanese.

Perhaps it would be the most enlightened and

farsighted policy to allow all these deposits of natural resources to lie fallow, until the Chinese themselves awake to their value and begin to work them. But no citizen of Japan, however farsighted or enlightened, is going to accept this point of view for his country, while he watches the Great Powers of Christendom scrambling for the loot. If Britain, with her vast Dominions, if France, with her great North African Empire, is justified in staking out claims in China, who will expect the Japanese, needing these resources so much more desperately, to be more self-denying? In the existing state of International Ethics, even the most passionate friend of the Chinese must admit that Japan has a right—at least as good a right as anybody else—to secure for herself access to these undeveloped resources.

But even an ardent friend of the Japanese is free to discuss the methods they have adopted towards this end and to doubt if they have been wise or effective.

First from a purely economic point of view, Japanese methods are open to criticism. They have too slavishly followed the example of their Christian rivals. Like them they have bitten off more than they can comfortably chew. In general, the industrial enterprises of foreigners in China have been unintelligently greedy. A group of investors has acquired—too often by bribery

and intimidation—a rich concession. In the normal process of development it would require a capital outlay of a million dollars and ten years' work before it would begin to give its maximum returns. But after a few hundred thousand dollars have been put into it and two or three years' development work has been done, attention is distracted by the chance of a new concession—farther in. If the claim is not staked out quickly, somebody else may jump it. And so the first concession is neglected in the scramble to obtain new ones. Very few such enterprises in China are fully developed. Over-expansion has been the rule. The map is all plastered over with paper concessions of the dog-in-the-manger type. The owners have not the capital to begin work, but they can keep anybody else from working.

The basic Japanese concession in China is the South Manchurian Railway, with all its subsidiary mining, agricultural and trading rights. If the Japanese had concentrated all their energy on this project, it would be largely prosperous. But they have neglected it, in their eagerness to establish themselves in Outer Mongolia. Now the railway is in financial difficulties. The Japanese banks find all their capital tied up in other prospectively prosperous but still undeveloped concessions, and can give no assistance. So the

Directors of the South Manchurian Railway had to appeal to foreign bankers to help them out.

The collapse of the French Banque Industrielle de Chine is another illustration of the general situation. Foreigners hold concessions on paper far in excess of the available capital for development. The Japanese have copied the errors of their competitors.

There is also a second sound criticism of Japanese methods in China. Their economic position has been weakened by their failure to create "good will." This is primarily a matter of politics, but it has had a striking and immediate effect on business. Their eagerness to secure control of raw materials by methods of political bullying ruined for a time the principal market for their manufactured products. The Chinese boycott against Japanese goods, due to political animosity aroused by the Twenty-one Demands, was a severe blow. The banks, already over-extended in the scramble for concessions and the wild-cat finance of the war period, could not carry the exporters, who were hit. The result was the worst crash in the financial history of Japan.

Her failure to reach a settlement of the Shantung question keeps the boycott alive. Methods of violence and intimidation may prevent rivals from securing concessions which the Japanese

want, but although you can rob people by force you cannot compel them to buy your products. A long continued and systematic boycott in China would surely ruin Japan.

The economic life of these two Oriental nations is so inexorably interwoven, both for export and import, that it seems obvious to the outsider that Japan's most vital interest is to secure the good will of the Chinese. Her one excuse for not doing so is the bad example set by her principal competitors.

There is still another fair criticism of Japanese commercial activity in China; it has not tended to strengthen her credit in the foreign markets where she must occasionally go for loans. The psychology of credit is one of the most subtle of unsolved problems. It costs the Japanese people a great deal to pay higher interest on their Imperial Bonds than some other countries. The South Manchurian Railway does not find "money cheap." That the bankers of Japan are fully alive to this problem is indicated by the fact that they were on the whole more conciliatory in the Consortium negotiations than some of the Japanese politicians.

But the future welfare of the Japanese economic life is more especially dependent on good relations with China. If this Conference at Washington can do something to civilize foreign

commercial enterprise in China—and the Western Powers could do a great deal by example—it would accomplish much for the Peace of the Orient. A really cordial entente between Japan and China, making possible friendly coöperation in industrial development, would be mutually advantageous and to the advantage of all the world.

CHAPTER VII

THE VITAL INTERESTS OF JAPAN—POLITICAL

THERE is general sympathy in the Western world for Japan's economic difficulties, but much less for her political activities. They are harder to understand.

Of late the Japanese have put in the forefront of their claims the "Recognition of Racial Equality." Very few students of international relations have been inclined to consider this a "vital interest" or even a serious issue of practical politics.

The emphasis which the Japanese Delegation at Paris put on Racial Equality has generally been described as a "smoke screen," intended to veil the affair of Shantung. It is a threadbare trick of traditional diplomacy to ask very firmly for something you do not expect to get, so that finally you may accept as a compromise, and with the appearance of gracious concession, the thing you really wanted.

The world has recognized Japanese superiority over most nations by giving them a seat among

the Great Powers on the Supreme Council. Their capacity in military matters is admittedly equal to any and superior to most. Although their industrialism is barely fifty years old, their commerce is competing on equal terms in the world's markets, and matches are not the only commodity in which they are out-competing most of us. If we consider the thrift and industry of their unskilled laborers, their superiority from a purely economic point of view is obvious and appalling. We pass Exclusion Acts against them, not because we look down on them, but because we are afraid of them. There is no occasion for any "recognition" of equality in these matters. The Japanese already have the rest of the world on a worried defensive.

However, if they mean by the phrase that there shall not be any discrimination against Asiatics in the domestic legislation of other countries, they are ignoring realities and asking for the moon. If Mr. Wilson at Paris had been willing to play unscrupulous politics, he might have supported the Japanese contention—with perfect assurance that the onus of refusing their request would fall on Mr. Lloyd George. The race question is more embarrassing for the British than for us. Their empire is heterogeneous in the extreme. Besides the stock of the United Kingdom, there are the mixed races of India, the city dwelling Copts and

nomadic Bedawi of Egypt, the naked blacks of Uganda and the primitive tribes of Australasia. Britain has gone farther than any other nation towards establishing equality before the law of all sorts and conditions of men, but she cannot accept any abstract civic and social equality for all this motley assembly. She cannot even grant complete freedom of migration within her own domains. Australia is just as intolerant of British subjects from India and Africa as of aliens from Japan.

Any nation, Japan just as quickly as we, will protect itself by Exclusion Laws against a threatened flood of alien immigrants which might undermine the standard of living to which its own people were accustomed. The Japanese statesmen know that it has nothing to do with the relative merit of different races. They also know that we are not inspired by any desire to affront them. In the conversations which preceded the Root-Takahira Agreement, in the more recent discussions at Washington between Mr. Morris and Baron Shidehara, they received every proof of our desire to deal with the subject in a spirit of courtesy and complete equality, as is right between one great nation and another.

The politicians could quiet the popular agitation on the subject in Japan very quickly by a clear statement of the remarkable cordiality

with which Japanese evolution from obscurity to a favored place among the five Superior Powers has been greeted by all the world.

The Japanese did not gain any new friends, nor any added respect among their old friends, by the use they made of this issue at Paris. They will be ill-advised if they raise it at Washington. Insistence on it will be generally interpreted as an attempt to throw a wooden shoe into the machinery. It might give them a chance to "save face," in case they want to bolt the Conference, but it certainly will not be a gesture of conciliation.

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Most of all Japan has lost sympathy in America and Europe through her recent political activity in China. For many years Cassandras have been "foretelling mischief," loud in their accusations of Japan's sinister plans in China. But just as the Athenians shrugged their shoulders at the Philippics of Demosthenes and believed that the Macedonian Menace was grossly exaggerated, so we have found it more comfortable to take these charges with a grain of salt.

However, everybody who wanted to be comfortable was rudely jolted by the publication of Japan's Twenty-one Demands on China. A good many books have been printed about this famous diplomatic document, and there is no need of

going over all the unsavory details. The nub of the matter was that this official act of the Japanese Government demonstrated that the most extreme jingoes were then in control of the Foreign Office.

Some of us had read von Bernhardi's book on "The Next War," when it was first published, before the fatal August of 1914. We comforted ourselves with the belief that he was the spokesman of only an uninfluential minority. But when the Chancellor of the Empire announced in the Reichstag that Belgium was to be invaded, there could not be any further illusion about the strength of the Military Party in Germany.

This is the real import of the incident of the Twenty-one Demands. They were unconscionably bad in detail, but the fundamental significance lay in the fact that those who believed in such rank aggression could have their way with the Government.

The Ministry which was responsible has fallen, and its policy has been condemned on the floor of the Diet in Tokio. But, despite fine words, neither the Chinese nor the outside world has been able to notice any marked change in Japanese political methods, nor any such significant transfers of personnel, as would be expected if the resolution to pursue a new policy were sincere.

Inevitably unpleasant questions arise. What is

Japan gunning for in China? What is the objective of all these corrupt intrigues and sword-clankings? Japanese publicists and statesmen have been reticent in explanation, or have contented themselves with unsatisfying generalities. It is therefore necessary to give attention to the explanations offered by others. These fall under two headings—Imperial Ambitions and Fear.

Many Europeans and Americans have returned from the Orient convinced, with a fanaticism past argument, that Japan has matured and detailed plans for the political subjugation of China, as a first step in the regimenting of the Asiatic hordes for a final assault on Western Civilization. They claim that there is a semi-secret society in Japan, called the Black Dragon, or the Scarlet Python—or some such sinisterly colored reptile—of which all prominent Japanese are members and which is not only obsessed by this lurid dream, but is working out the practical details. It is, they insist, an imminent danger.

Now, although the number of Westerners who believe all this is considerable, it is absurd. The Japanese have not shown any marked genius for colonial administration and we, Anglo-Saxons, who consider ourselves rather better at it than the average, always have to begin by disarming our subject races. We could not start construc-

tive work in the Philippines, until we had taken their guns away from them. After more than a hundred years in India, Britain was able to bring only a very small contingent of native troops into the Great War. I have not seen any exact figures, but I doubt if the British find it expedient to allow one in five thousand of their subject peoples to bear arms. We will not have to worry about a vast Chinese Army, under the orders of the General Staff at Tokio, until we hear that the Japanese have found themselves able to arm and drill a noticeable contingent from Korea.

There remains the other possible explanation. It is generally agreed that quite as much turpitude is caused by fear as by aggressive greed. Put yourself in the position of a thoughtful, patriotic citizen of Japan, look about on the world of today and try to peer out into the future. The prospect is not reassuring. Japan is overcrowded. Even with increased population she cannot greatly—certainly not indefinitely—expand her Army and Navy. Across the narrow seas there is this vast conglomeration of Chinese—400 millions of them at least. Suppose that China, moving more slowly because of her bulk, goes through an evolution in the next hundred years comparable to that of Japan in the last half century. Suppose that the United States acts as

big brother and presides over this process of rejuvenation. Japan will be a very small nut in the jaws of an immense nut-cracker. I do not see how any Japanese can think of the probable development of China without grave misgivings—without serious temptation to thwart it.

Turn for a moment from this little known and unfamiliar East to the nearer lands across the Atlantic. There is a striking analogy between the Sino-Japanese situation and the conflicting interests of Germany and France. There are about 40 million French, with little hope of increase, while across the Rhine there is a growing population of Teutons already twice as numerous. Can we expect France to have any honest desire for the regeneration of Germany? Not unless there is some organization of the nations which effectively guarantees her from attack. Failing such an assurance her only hope of safety lies in keeping Germany weak, in stirring up enmities among the nations of Europe. If the Teutons and the Slavs should unite there would be short shrift for the Latins.

So it is in the Far East. When we talk of strengthening China, the Japanese suspect us of trying to build up an ally for use against them. Their vital interest of territorial security is at stake. They certainly have more reason to be jumpy on the subject than we have over "foreign

influences" in Mexico. So far they have contrived no way to meet this menace, except by intrigues in China to prevent her reorganization.

The Chinese have a fable which is apropos. Once upon a time a half-grown Fox found a baby Lion and adopted it as a playfellow. At first the Fox, because of its superior age, could have its own way. But as the Lion cub grew, and it grew so much faster than the Fox, it gathered strength, and the Fox began to worry about the future. "Who can wonder" the fable ends, "that the Fox lost its temper and snapped at the Lion?"

The Japanese are too proud to admit this as an explanation of their activities in China. But we may be sure that always in the back of the heads of the members of the Japanese Delegation at Washington will be the realization that it may be very dangerous for their country if any unfriendly nation develops the potential strength of China.

CHAPTER VIII

CHINA'S VITAL INTERESTS

No amount of pomp and ceremony, no amiable fictions, can disguise the fact that China will attend the Washington Conference in the rôle of a minor among its Guardians. An ancient Monarchy, too decrepit to defend its interests against aggressive foreigners, has fallen before a very juvenile Revolution, not yet grown up to dignity and power. The Celestial Empire of the Manchus was the Sick Man of Asia. The young Republic is the *enfant terrible*. It has not yet struck its pace nor found its place. Nobody knows how fast it will go, nor the direction it will take. Anything, so uncertain, is terrible in the staid society of nations.

Mr. Bland has perhaps been too severely sarcastic about Young China in his recent volume on "China, Korea and Japan," but even if exaggerated his bill of complaint shows the nature of China's troubles. Two groups of not very experienced politicians—one in the North, the other

in the South—claim each to be the Constitutional Government of the Republic and carry on a Civil War, which consists largely of mutual recriminations and attempts to undermine the loyalty of the opposing troops—which do not very often meet in battle. While this forensic conflict rages between Pekin and Canton, the real powers of government are wielded by local satraps—the Provincial Tuchuns—who are frankly more interested in emoluments than in the *Res Publica*. Neither the Government of the North nor that of the South can give its edicts force through any large territory. The strength which results from National Unity—urged by the ancient sages as well as by modern advisers—does not now exist in China.

It was a wise move to invite China to send representatives to join in the discussion of Far Eastern Affairs, but it would be a grave mistake to take them too seriously. It was wise because it shows our good will towards China and we want her good will. It was wise because of its educational value. But the Delegation will not in any true sense represent the vast mass of Chinese; they will be the agents of the clique now in control at Pekin. We may be quite sure that at least half of the Chinese will denounce them as traitors, taking orders—and bribes—from Tokio.

Their position will not be unlike that of the Turks at the Congress of Berlin in 1879. Their fate will be the principal subject of discussion, but they will have to rely on others to defend their interests. It is not even probable that they will be able to define their interests convincingly.

They will arrive at the Conference with a thick portfolio full of complaints—justified complaints against the high-handed aggressions of more powerful nations. But judging from past performances, it is not probable that they will be helpful in suggesting any practical and constructive measures to improve the situation.

The Destiny of China, more strikingly than with almost any other nation, will be determined by her own people. Her undeveloped power in men, in material and wealth is tremendous. So is her present disorganization. There is very little that outsiders can do to help her, unless she learns to help herself. And when once she does acquire cohesion she will not need any outside help. But this internal weakness is the phase of her troubles which her representatives are least disposed to discuss; they are more likely to demand a paper recognition of unreal "sovereignty," than to seek the means to make the sovereignty real; more likely to complain of the abuses of extra-territoriality, than to improve the administration of justice so that foreigners would

have assurance of protection. They will probably demand that respect which other nations have had to win.

It is difficult to define the real interests of China, because in this matter, as in others, they are a house divided. But there would be little dispute that the problem which overshadows all others for them is their relation to Japan. Is it to be friendship and collaboration or hatred and conflict?

Recently a young Chinese student told me that he hoped the outcome of this Conference would be the formal annexation by Japan of Manchuria and Shantung. "That," he said, "would give us just the Alsace-Lorraine we need to bring about national unity. We could stimulate a hatred of Japan, a desire for revenge which would bring us together as one man—as surely as the German menace has united France. And then," he ended gleefully, "when the inevitable war breaks out between you and Japan, you could be sure that every Japanese in China would be killed within three days." When I pointed out that this Conference was called in the hope of avoiding war, of reducing armaments, he lost all interest. While his was a foolish and reckless proposal, it is based on a theory held—in somewhat more moderate terms—by many Chinese. It is rather like the old Fenian slogan—"England's distress

is Ireland's opportunity." The Chinese of this school advocate playing America off against Japan, seeing nothing but gain for themselves in the anticipated conflict. It is to be hoped that the Chinese Delegation at Washington will not act on this theory, intentionally troubling the waters, in their eagerness to take home a great fish.

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But it is a serious error to think that "Young China" is wholly anti-Japanese. Many more Chinese of "Foreign Learning"—the leaders of the Student Movement—have been educated in Japan than have gone to the schools of the West. And even if Japan is today the worst offender against China's interests, they realize that she is only tardily following the example of the nations which call themselves Christian.

Of course the great illiterate mass of Chinese are utterly—if not blissfully—indifferent to the rival claims of those who scramble for concessions. Among the small minority, who are interested in their country's place in the world, those who call themselves Pro-Japanese are quite as numerous as those who are Anti. The frequency with which some of the "leaders" switch from one party to the other indicates that there is a great deal to be said for each side and that Public Opinion in China has not definitely decided between them.

One thing which generally surprises the Westerner is to find that even the Chinese, who are the most angry and bitter against their fellow countrymen, whom they accuse of taking orders from Tokio, are not really afraid of the Japanese. The learning of their schools is primarily in the Classics and History. They know how often they have been conquered and how they have always come out on top. Genghis Khan was not the first, nor the last, invader who boasted of having subdued China and in the end was taken captive by her. They regard the Manchus, for instance, not as alien masters, but as a barbarian people to whom they taught civilization. And so the Chinese of today are not really afraid of Japan—knowledge of their past has given them faith in the future.

A prominent Chinese official is quoted as having said: "We ought to ask Japan to conquer us. She would give us a good government, teach us all the new learning which has made her strong, and when the lesson is over, when Japan has taught us all she can—we will be strong enough to brush her aside."

Something like this is probably the natural trend of events. It was the sword of Cæsar that brought civilization to Britain, and Bernard Shaw used to say that it was a misfortune for England that she had not been conquered by Napoleon.

Some one has spoken of the Czechs as "Prussianized Slavs." And certainly a comparison of their orderly and efficient Legions in Siberia with the Russian Army of Kolchak indicated that they had learned some valuable lessons in the long years they suffered under Teuton oppression. Perhaps, if Nature were left to herself the only way she could think of to regenerate China would be to let the Japanese rule her for a half century or so.

But we are not content to let Nature take her course. The one reason for this Conference at Washington is to attempt to persuade "natural man," with his instinctive love of arms, to become more "civilized." We cannot be content to allow the civilization of the East to wait on the crude old processes of war. We must strive to arrange matters so that Japan and the other nations can carry on their educational work in China without shooting her up. We must try to furnish China with what she needs without making her pay too heavily.

The old maxim says that it takes two to make a quarrel; it is even more true that it takes two to make a friendship. And the latter is much the more difficult. Sudden and shortlived anger will start a fight, the establishment of cordial coöperation is the work of slow reason. It requires continuity of effort as well as good will. But good will on both sides is the condition pre-

cedent. The Conference at Washington has a large opportunity for beneficent activity in trying to bring China and Japan towards the spirit of Entente.

Once her relations with Japan were put on a secure basis, China could proceed with her internal reorganization. First of all comes finance, more of the money collected in taxes must be returned to the people in public service, and less of it go into the pockets of officials. The Republic will not deserve respect until it has disbanded the irregular troops of the Provincial Tuchuns and built up a loyal National Police Force adequate for the task of restoring authority. Then China needs all sorts of transportation facilities, railroads, canals, highways. Also improved mails and telegraphs. It is only with a good network of communications that national unity can be developed. Educational facilities demand attention. The old classical examinations have been abandoned and no new national system installed. China does not so much need foreign schools, where Lincoln and Gladstone will be held up as models, as her own native schools, where the fine heritage of her antique culture will be revered.

In such matters the foreigners can aid with advice and in some cases with capital and trained experts, but most of such work will have to be done by the Chinese themselves.

The one most valuable thing that the foreign nations could do to help China would be to invent some way to restrain their own citizens from corrupting Chinese officials with bribes.

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This Conference at Washington will accomplish more for the cause of Peace, if it works out plans of active coöperation, than if it contents itself with pledges not to do this and not to do that. Much can be accomplished along these lines by the Consortium, if all the Four Powers will get behind it heartily. But coöperation implies a fair sharing of the profits and we cannot expect any one to come into the Consortium wholeheartedly unless it offers them quite as much as they could expect to get by playing a lone hand. But if the agreement can be made mutually satisfactory, there is fair hope that Japan will gradually, through such collaboration, lose her suspicious fear of a China controlled by hostile foreigners. There is very little that the other nations can accomplish for the good of China if the Japanese are working against them.

Here also a great deal depends on China. So far the Consortium has marked time, because the Chinese were suspicious. It is to be hoped that their delegates will go home from the Conference thoroughly convinced that this offer of assistance is sincere and disposed to urge the coöperation of their people.

CHAPTER IX

THE INTERESTS OF THE OTHER POWERS

CERTAIN of the smaller nations have been invited to send delegates to the Conference. They will take part in the discussions when matters affecting their interests are on the Agenda. Holland is the country most concerned, because of her large colonial holdings in the East Indies and her profitable Oriental trade. She is also interested in the fate of the Island of Yap, as one of her cables terminates there. Portugal controls the Treaty Port of Macao and Belgium has some industrial concessions in China. But the participation of these lesser Powers will probably be limited to details and will have little influence on the major questions of policy, on which the fate of the Conference will hang.

The rôle which France and Italy will play has excited much more speculation. The Senate Resolution proposed a Tripartite Conference of Great Britain, Japan and the United States to discuss the limitation of Naval Armaments. Mr. Hughes sent invitations to "the Principal

Associated Powers" and expanded the scope of the Conference to include discussion of the Pacific Problems. In view of the limited interests of France and Italy in Far Eastern affairs and their lesser interest in naval rivalries, their invitation caused some surprise. It has been suggested that the Department of State, in reaffirming in this manner a continued solidarity of interest with the nations which had been associated with us in the War, wished to counteract the contrary impression which had been created by the Separate Peace with Germany.

France has more extensive interests in the Far East than Italy. "Indo-Chine" is a large and prosperous colony which she annexed after a war with China. From it as a base she has staked out a "sphere of influence" of ambitious proportions in Southern China. The recent crash of the Banque Industrielle de Chine indicates that in the scramble for concessions, the French have over-extended on their available capital, even more than the Japanese. France is also a member of the Four Power Chinese Consortium. So her "interests" in the Orient, while not so great as those of Britain and Japan, are considerably larger than Italy's.

Both France and Italy are, like us, protectionist countries, and their attitude towards the Open Door will probably be ambiguous. They would

welcome equal opportunities for their trade in all markets where they have not yet established a favored position for themselves. But, just like us, they would be inclined to think that any proposal to apply the Open Door Policy in their own dependencies was running a good idea into the ground.

In regard to the Limitation of Naval Armaments, France's interest, like that of most other nations, is very close to ours. The Freedom of the Seas, based on a generally accepted Code of Sea Law, sanctioned by the consent of those to be governed by it, inevitably seems more attractive than the present uncertainty, to all countries that cannot hope for naval supremacy. We are not the only country which believes in the Freedom of the Seas. In most International Conferences to discuss Sea Law, Britain has found herself alone against all the other nations in opposing our contention.

Italy's position in regard to Naval Disarmament will not be quite the same as France's, for her situation is different. With the great fleets of Britain, America and Japan she has small concern. Her problems are nearer home and on a smaller scale. She is more interested in the Greek Fleet and Naval Supremacy in the near Eastern waters.

The problem of Armaments for both France

and Italy is primarily a matter of land forces and European issues. If we may judge from the official statements of the pre-Conference period there is no intention to discuss these questions at Washington. They can hardly be touched upon without going profoundly into the problems of the League of Nations. If France is to be left to face Germany single-handed, it is utterly futile to propose disarmament to her. And Italy also has a serious problem on her hands in the unstable conditions across the Adriatic. None of the Balkan States were contented with the boundaries given them at Paris. If France has the German Menace as an excuse for maintaining heavy military expenditures, which she cannot afford, Italy has the Slavs.

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However, although their interests in the Far East and in Naval Disarmaments are relatively slight, the French and Italian Delegations may play an important rôle at Washington.

First of all, despite the numerous irritations between their people—similar to the occasional frictions between us and our English cousins—the Latin Sisters will act as a unit to prevent, if possible, the formation of an Anglo-American Alliance—even if Japan is included. When Lloyd George proposes that we come in with them in alliance with Japan, he always takes

pains to insist that its object is altruistic, to preserve the peace of the world. American propagandists of the "English-Speaking-Union" also talk as if all the world would benefit by such a combination and that no one could take offense. It has always been the custom to "prepare" Public Opinion with similar altruistic oratory for every Alliance. Bismarck's Triple Alliance—Germany, Austria, Italy—was announced as an effort to preserve peace. The Entente, which was formed to balance it, gave out similar advance notices. But Alliances, no matter how bedecked with fine phrases, have always turned out to be very selfish affairs. What we talk of as Anglo-American coöperation is described by the rest of the world as the "Menace of Anglo-Saxon Domination"—"The English-speaking Imperialism." It is a favorite theme of present-day political writers in Germany. It is the secret fear of Latin and Slav.

France, having no faith in a League of Nations from which we abstain, is today seeking Alliances with the Slav nations, partly out of fear that Germany may become dangerously strong again, partly to find support to oppose British hegemony in Europe. If we sign up with the British, the Latins and Slavs will almost certainly form a solid block and quickly compose their difficulties with the Teutons. It may be unreasonable of

them to suspect our Anglo-Saxon motives, but they do, and they do not want to be dominated by us.

Naturally, when we try to balance the arguments, pro and con, in regard to Lloyd George's proposal of an Anglo-American-Japanese Alliance, we are not frightened at the prospect of being dominated. The problem appears to us rather as a question of whether we could expect sufficient gains to compensate for the responsibility involved in helping to keep the British Empire together, holding the lid on India and Egypt, supporting Anglo-Japanese policies in Asia in possible conflicts with a regenerated Russia, etc. But it does not look so simple to those who have not been invited to join the combination.

It will be a great advantage to have at the Council Table in Washington friends who will be able to show us how this proposal looks from the outside. Perhaps we will decide to give this Triple Alliance a try—it certainly is a strong combination, the dominant power in Europe, America and Asia—but if we are to go in for it, it will be well to have our eyes wide open. It will not be popular outside its own membership. A hostile block will certainly be formed to restore the Balance of Power.

* * *

If, on the whole, it is a very good thing to have the non-Anglo-Saxon Powers well represented at this Conference, it also presents a grave danger. The old traditional diplomacy of bargaining and intrigue has a much more stubborn hold on the Continental mind than it has on us. A narrow Nationalism, running counter not only to the idea of a League of Nations but also to any international faith or coöperation, is rampant. This is dishearteningly apparent in the French press. It does not seem to have occurred to their editors that our Government could be moved by a sincere desire to find a basis for conciliation in summoning this Conference. Their general interpretation of our position is that, in the face of an inevitable and imminent conflict with Japan, we are in the market for allies. An article by a former Minister of Foreign Affairs is amusingly frank in estimating what price France should charge us for her vote against Japan.

If the French or Italian Delegation should be dominated by this point of view we will all wish that they had stayed at home. Any one with the laziness of mind to think that war is inevitable will be a dead weight at this Conference.

The sharp conflicts of interest, the crucial issues before the Conference, are triangular. They lie between Britain, America and Japan. In

most of the areas of danger, France and Italy are relatively neutral. And therein lies their opportunity to play a beneficent rôle at Washington. As conciliators, largely disinterested in the detail frictions, by real coöperation in the cause of Peace, they may justify Mr. Hughes in having invited them. If they act in this spirit we will all be glad they came.

* * *

There is one question of very vivid interest to these European Powers, which, while it may never get on the formal Agenda, is sure to be discussed informally, and that is finance. There was even some talk in Europe of an International Financial Conference to sit at the same time as the other one. But that suggestion was frowned upon in Washington. The financial distress is, however, so acute in Europe, and they are in the habit of thinking us so prosperous, that it is almost certain that this will be a greater preoccupation in the minds of most of the European delegates than Naval Rivalry or Far Eastern problems. They will be more interested in Mr. Mellon's proposals for handling the Allied Debt than in Mr. Hughes' plans for China.

* * *

The greatest impediment to the establishment of an International Equilibrium today is the number of those who are absent at roll call. The League of Nations limps, one can almost say

staggers, because three great nations—Germany, Russia and the United States—are not present. Adjustment of differences in the Far East will be rendered more difficult because of the weakness of China. She will attend this Conference as a Minor. But Russia's chair will be vacant.

Who can pretend to say what are vital interests for Russia in the Pacific? Besides all the inevitable uncertainties of the future there are the manifold uncertainties of the present.

Russia's hold on Siberia has never been truly consolidated. Nuclei of Russian colonists on the river routes of Central and Western Siberia have, in the last generation, grown into great cities. But the population everywhere is sparse and the indigenous tribes are not Slav. East of Lake Baikal there has never been any large Russian civilian settlements. Vladivostok was a great fortress, in the days before the War it had a large garrison, but most of the civilians were railroad officials or parasitic on the troops.

Not long ago, before the Japanese War, Russia had a similar position in Manchuria. They had built the railroads, garrisoned the large towns and begun the development of industrial enterprise. But you have to strain your eyes today, along the South Manchurian Railway, in Dairen or Port Arthur, to see any signs of this Russian control. It had no deep roots.

When Russia begins her convalescence, it will

start in all probability in the old centers of national life—in European Muscovy. No one knows how long it will take the forces of reorganization to reach out to the periphery. If, as has been promised, Russia is to find more easy outlets to the warm seas of the West through the Dardanelles and the ports of the Baltic, the basic motive for her push towards the East will be lacking. It is a reckless prophet who will pretend to say when Russia will again be a Great Power with "vital interests" on the Pacific. But it is just as foolhardy to prophesy that she will not soon appear as a factor of importance in the Far East. Her frontier with China is the longest in the world. The problems of the present are hard enough to solve, those of the future are desperately complicated by this vacant chair.

At the Inter-Communications Conference in Washington last year, the center of the stage was held by the controversy over the disposition of the German cables, but all the while the experts were at work on technical problems. One of them was the allocation of the different wave lengths for radio communications. In the present state of the science there are not enough wave lengths to satisfy all the governments, so there was a strong temptation to divide them all up among the five Powers represented at the Conference—America, Britain, France, Italy and

Japan. It took a deal of argument to persuade all the Powers, none of whom were getting all they wanted, to scale down their claims so as to leave a margin for the use of the unrepresented, Germany and Russia. But that was the only possible way to deal with the problem, unless we wanted all the schedules upset in a few years.

It is the same in the case of the Far Eastern Problems. Unless Russia's eventual interests in the Pacific are safeguarded, all the nice plans the Conference may make are very likely to be upset.

CHAPTER X

THE THREE ZONES OF CONFLICT

A SURVEY of what the various nations are accustomed to call their "vital interests" shows three danger zones, where these interests are at odds: (1) Anglo-American Naval Competition, (2) Trade Rivalries in the Far East and (3) the Fate of China. There will doubtless be other disagreements on details, but if the Conference at Washington can reach agreements, composing these major conflicts, the main motives for Naval Competitions will fall to the ground.

Terrible as is the tax on this now poverty-stricken world of the preparations for war, the expense is small indeed to the cost of actual war—or even to the economic loss from the fear of war. The depressing thing about competition in armaments is that it indicates the frame of mind which makes war probable, and what the shaken fabric of our civilization needs today is the assurance of peace. Without it there can be no rebirth of credit, no rejuvenating flow of commerce along the old trade routes, no prosper-

ity. All agree that another great war would wreck us. The maintenance of threatening armaments, postponing any reëstablishment of confidence, will be just as disastrous. If the Great Powers which have been called to this Conference at Washington cannot compose their differences and begin to disarm, the stock of our civilization, already rather below par, will slump appallingly. Failure would mean not only increased budgets for armaments, but the strangling of all enterprise through the fear of new wars.

No one of these major problems is new; they have been discussed for years. So it is not probable that any strikingly new ideas will develop at Washington. The Conference will choose between proposals already familiar.

* * *

The first Zone of Conflict is the oldest. For a hundred years there has been dispute between this country and Britain about the control of the seas. The British have in general maintained that, due to their unique island position, it was a vital interest to them to hold in their own hands undisputed naval supremacy. We have maintained that the seas are a common heritage of all the world and that their control should be based on common consent. This is what we have meant by "The Freedom of the Seas," a

freedom under Laws, like those of the land, deriving their authority from the consent of the governed.

The British came very close to our point of view in the years immediately preceding the War. The Declaration of London was the first serious attempt to draft a Code of Sea Law, which would be agreed to by the Maritime Nations. The experience of the War has intensified the feeling on both sides of the argument. If the Declaration of London had been generally accepted, it would to a certain extent have hampered the British Navy in its blockade of Germany, on the other hand it would also have hampered Germany in her submarine attack on the British mercantile marine. And merchantmen are just as important to Britain in time of war as battle-cruisers.

We have no authoritative statement of the British attitude today towards this old controversy. But Sir Edward Grey, while he was still Minister of Foreign Affairs, promised that Great Britain would take the initiative in summoning a Conference of Maritime Nations to discuss the Law of the Seas as soon as the War was over. Perhaps an agreement along these lines will put an end to this over-old dispute.

During the Peace Negotiations at Paris this question of the Freedom of the Seas was put on the shelf, because it would be solved automati-

cally if all the principal maritime nations coöperated in the League of Nations.

There is also another solution of the problem proposed by Lloyd George, an Anglo-American-Japanese Alliance. An alliance in which the two fleets were pledged to act as a unit would obviously do away with any competition.

* * *

The Trade Rivalry in the Far East, which has taken the form of a scramble for concessions in China, is a special phase of a larger problem which the Professors of Economics call "The Export of Capital" and Lenin calls "Capitalistic Imperialism."

In its most general terms the problem can be stated very simply. The development of industrialism results not only in the production of commodities in surplus over the consumptive power of the home market and so pushes commerce out into an export trade; it also produces a surplus of capital over the needs of the domestic investment market. As the rate of interest falls at home, when supply of money exceeds demands, the people with savings begin to look abroad for investments. The highly developed industrial community must find not only foreign markets in which to sell its commodities, but also foreign investments for its surplus savings.

A classic example is furnished by the financial relations of the Old World and the New. We

held a land of vast potentialities. But we were poor and needed capital to develop our resources. Our railroad expansion, after the Civil War, was rendered possible by the surplus savings of Europe. As our wealth developed we were paying off this debt easily. The War hastened the process tremendously, but even if it had not been for the War we would probably have cleared our books within this decade or the next.

But the Exportation of Capital from the more to the less developed countries has not always had so beneficent a result. Borrowing is very dangerous if you are weak or foolish. The foreign capital invested in America went into wealth producing enterprises, which were more than able to pay regular interest and sinking fund. Europe lent money to the Sultans of Turkey and Morocco, to the Khedive of Egypt, the Shah of Persia, most of which was thrown away on the ladies of the Court.

Perhaps the first European bankers who lent money to irresponsible little potentates were disappointed when they could not get their money back. But very quickly the governments which wished to extend their influence over backward native states began to encourage such reckless loans. A bad debt could easily be turned into a political lien, a good pretext for annexation—or at least a Protectorate.

That is the danger in China. Some of the foreign loans have been sound economic investments. They have been profitable to the lenders and have largely increased the wealth of China. Some loans, made in good faith, have been grossly misused by corrupt Chinese officials. And some of the loans have been made with bad faith—in the hope of political rather than financial profit.

The object of the present Four Power Consortium is to safeguard both China and the investors from unsound—politically motived—finance. Through their central office in Pekin the consolidated bankers of the Four Powers with Capital to export will be able to study every proposal for a loan on its financial merits and supervise its investment. The danger of corruption and waste—even more dangerous to China than to the lenders—is greatly reduced.

Perhaps of even more importance than the safeguarding of China from the menace of politically-minded high finance, the Consortium proposal is worthy of note as a means of associating together in a large coöperation the Four Powers who hitherto have done business in China on the basis of cut-throat competition. It is by the development of such associated endeavors, far more than by passing Self-Denying Acts, that the hostilities of trade rivalry may be reduced.

* * *

There remains the third and perhaps the most difficult question for the Conference to solve—The Preservation or Partition of China. It is of course closely interwoven with the issue of trade rivalries, but there is a political phase of the matter, quite distinct from economic considerations.

The history of the Sick Man of Europe gives us a good example of how not to treat China. For a hundred years the Concert of European Powers tried to keep Turkey intact, not because of any care for the interests of Turkey, but because there was such acute hostility between the possible heirs that war was almost certain when the inheritance came to be divided. No one wanted to keep the Turk alive indefinitely; they simply wanted to defer his death till circumstances would assure them a larger share of the estate. The result of this policy was only increasing jealousies and hate. Any attempt to preserve the territorial integrity of China in a similar spirit will be a bitter farce. Formal homage to an unreal sovereignty, as a cover to such political and financial chicanery and intrigue as that of the Great Powers in Constantinople, would be little better than a frank partition.

The fundamental question of course is whether or not the Chinese have the energy and aptitude for real national unity. If they have they will

rise triumphant over any bad decision this Conference at Washington may make. If they have not, good resolutions passed at Washington will be scraps of paper.

Britain and France, while not announcing any intentions of abandoning their present establishments on Chinese soil, are prepared to call a halt, and give China not only a fair chance, but also a helping hand. Japan's attitude is more uncertain; probably because her national mind is not made up one way or the other. There is one group which holds that relations between nations must be those of the hammer and the anvil, and is grimly resolved to give blows rather than to receive them. It is the habit of thought which ruled at Potsdam. It regards every proposal of coöperation as a crafty trap. It cannot imagine that other nations can embark on any enterprise in China without ulterior and sinister designs against the prestige and power of Japan. It is quite as jumpy about missionaries as about traders. The prospects of Peace in the Orient are very meager if this clique wins to power—and they were undisputedly in power when the Twenty-one Demands were made on China.

But there is in Japan another element, also sometimes in power, which sees that nothing could be more valuable for Japan than real friendship with China and collaboration with the

Western Powers. Much depends on the outcome of the struggle for power in Japanese politics between these two factions.

It would seem therefore that the wise strategy of all who desire peace in the Far East, is to strengthen the hands of the Japanese Liberals. In order to win and hold a following at home, they must be in a position to prove that Japan's interests both in commerce and politics are safeguarded in their hands. Any attempt to drive a hard bargain with Japan at Washington, to push her into an uncomfortable dilemma between "isolation" and accepting unfavorable conditions, will merely cause resentment and suspicion. If the Western Powers attempt to "isolate" or "encircle" Japan they will only succeed in Prussianizing her.

By generous dealings we can increase the number of Japanese who are willing to coöperate in the Consortium, and who see in international association for the upbuilding of China a prospect of enlarged prosperity, instead of a menace.

CHAPTER XI

WHAT MAY RESULT

“PROPHECY is the least excusable form of human error” and any attempt at precise forecasts about this Conference at Washington would be absurd. There are, however, three main possibilities which—judging from the pre-Conference discussion—may result. The League of Nations. An Anglo-American-Japanese Alliance. Failure.

As soon as any one of these possibilities is stated clearly and simply it becomes improbable, for as a rule such Conferences do not arrive at sharp and well-defined conclusions. The great decisions of Politics are not simple enough to happen all at once.

The growing realization of this complexity in the relations of mankind is reflected in the more modern histories. They are less occupied with dates than with drifts. It is possible to fix the day on which Charles I. lost his head, but every advance in modern research makes it more difficult to set a date for the Fall of Rome—the Eternal City crumbled through so many decades.

When did the Reformation begin or the French Revolution end?

Some formal documents, which we all can read and which will bear dates, will doubtless be signed by this Conference, but they will not be nearly so important as the frame of mind in which the delegates will go home and report to their people. Will it be with new and profounder understanding of each other's motives and interests—or with deeper and more dangerous misunderstandings?

The future historian, looking back on this period, will pay small heed to the formal documents. He will write that, in the second decade of the 20th Century, a trend developed becoming more and more noticeable after the Conference at Washington, which brought the United States into the League of Nations, or perhaps that a drift set strongly against any universal covenant and that a struggle for power developed between the Anglo-American-Japanese group on the one hand, and on the other a combination of Latin and Slav and Teuton. There is also the third possibility. He may write that, disappointed by the failure of the Washington Conference to reach any reassuring results, the American people lost all confidence in International Coöperation and withdrew into an Isolation, which they could only maintain by increased armament.

Recognizing that no such clear-cut choice of

policy is likely to result immediately from the Conference, but that the trend of the next few years may be in one of these three directions, it will make the issues somewhat clearer to consider them in greater detail.

* * *

First of all, it is a matter of record that the American Delegates have favored the League of Nations. Mr. Lodge, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, was responsible for drawing up the Resolution for the Ratification of the Treaty of Versailles, with a group of reservations, which bear his name. Evidently he was not at that time opposed to the League in principle. Senator Underwood voted for the ratification, without reservations. Mr. Root has long supported the idea of the League, giving especial attention to the International Court. Mr. Hughes signed the Manifesto of the Pro-League Republicans, advising the electorate to vote for Mr. Harding, as the surest way of getting the United States into the League.

It is not impossible that this Conference, meeting in Washington, may furnish an elementary demonstration of the benefits we would derive from membership in the League. It may educate the Senate. For the major problems, to be threshed out before the Conference, with the Senate leaders of the two great parties sitting at the

Council Table, could be more readily and more satisfactorily settled by the League, under universal sanction, than by agreements between a few nations. If we are to make pledges for the preservation of peace and the reduction of armaments in the Pacific, we will have to "limit the national sovereignty" and "tie the hands of Congress," just as much as if the subject of the accord was Trans-Atlantic. If we can safely enter into "entanglements" to preserve "the territorial integrity" of China, the teeth are pulled from all the arguments against Article X.

It is an innovation in the practice of diplomacy to summon a great International Conference in order to educate our own Senators, but the Premiers, who are expected to attend, would consider their time well spent if this result were attained. Even without our collaboration, the rest of the world is struggling to keep the League alive. There is some doubt whether it can ever function adequately without us, but in spite of this handicap it has proved its usefulness to Europe—especially to the smaller nations—and our entrance would strengthen it greatly and give it a new hope.

* * *

An influence, urging the American Delegation to consider the League, stronger than any argument by its supporters at home or from abroad,

is that the only other alternative, so far suggested, which offers any hope of a noticeable reduction in armaments, is the proposal of Lloyd George for an Anglo-American-Japanese Alliance.

This offer would not have been made, if the British Government had not been compelled to conclude that our rejection of the League is final. The British Commonwealth would prefer the League to this Triple Alliance. They sent Lord Grey, an ardent supporter of the League, to us as Ambassador in the hope that he might overcome our objections. They have made every effort in their power to meet our wishes in the matter. But after the speech of the American Ambassador at the dinner of the Pilgrim Society in London, the British cannot, without direct insult to him, make any further overtures in this sense. They, therefore, must seek to contrive some other method of meeting the manifold and vexatious problems with which our weary, perplexed and impoverished generation is confronted. From this point of view—if we have definitely made up our minds to scrap the League—this British proposal has much to commend it. It is admirably thought out to cover all the objects set forth in Mr. Hughes' invitation to this Conference. At one stroke of the pen, it would remove the cause for all naval rivalry between

the contracting parties. With assured command of the sea, all three partners would be safe from invasion and the defensive land armies could be reduced to a police minimum. There would be no call for large armaments, unless the Alliance embarked on a policy of aggression. In the Far East, the Alliance would probably recognize the preponderant special interests of Japan in Eastern Asia, but maintain the present frontiers of China and Siberia. Large economic opportunities would be assured to all three. Such an Alliance, grouping the dominant Powers in the three Continents, would probably assure the peace of the world for a generation or more. The war-wrecked countries of Europe could not hope to muster strength for effective opposition for many years.

There is also no certainty that such a combination would prove as malevolent as those countries, which were not included, would expect. Perhaps a generation of stability is all the race needs to conquer its more greedy and arrogant instincts. The Peace of Rome, in spite of its tyrannies and extortions, did push forward the cause of civilization. And such an Alliance might develop a more enlightened policy than that of the Roman Cæsars. It might on the whole deal justly with the weak—the Chinese and Siberians, as well as Europeans. It might from time to time admit

into its ranks other, equally enlightened, nations and in the end prove to have been the first stage in the development of a Universal Brotherhood of Peace.

However, nobody but Britishers, Americans and Japanese will expect it to. To everybody else it will look like a new scheme for world domination. Human nature in the past—even in the most recent past—has never been able to resist the intoxication of such power.

But quite aside from consideration of the desirability of such an Alliance, our Delegation at Washington will be preoccupied with the question of practical Politics. Could they put it across?

We have quite recently given the world a sharp lesson in our Constitutional practice. No engagements signed by our Plenipotentiaries—even the most august—are worth the paper they are written on, unless they are ratified by the Senate. Other nations are not likely to take so important a step as the reduction of their armaments on the mere word of American diplomats. They will want to see the bond signed and sealed by our Elder Statesmen.

Even if Mr. Hughes decides that our interests would be best safeguarded by such an Alliance, there is large doubt of his ability to get two-thirds of the Senate to ratify it. Some of them would oppose a treaty with Britain or Japan if

its purpose was to protect the Law of Gravitation from the wanton aggressions of Mr. Einstein. It is not difficult to imagine the roars of outraged traditionalism which would resound in the Hall of the Senate, if a Secretary of State should present such a proposal. Are "Our Boys," yet unborn, to be snatched from their eventual cradles to fight the battles of Perfidious Albion or the Oriental Despot of Japan?

Unless our Delegation at Washington can think out some new combination which will bring about a reduction of armaments, they will have to take this proposal or the Treaty of Versailles to the Senate. Of the two difficulties, the League seems the lesser. The people are favorable and most of the Senators have already, with some qualifications, voted for it.

* * *

The only other alternative, which appears from the Pre-Conference discussion, is blank and dismal failure. To consider such an outcome is to reject it as impossible. It would be too great a disaster to accept. It would mean frank and open hostility with the British Empire and an inevitable intensification of naval rivalry. They have urged—almost begged—us to come into the League. They have held out to us a very elaborate olive branch in this proposal for an equal share in the profits of ruling the world. If we

reject both of their offers of friendly coöperation, making no satisfactory counter-proposal, they cannot attribute our attitude to anything but ill-will. If we fail to reach an agreement with Japan, it is equally certain that intensified jealousies and antagonisms will result. Failure means sullen and suspected Isolation for us—and more armaments.

There is no doubt that the country demands results. Even if we did not have confidence in the sincerity of Mr. Hughes' desire to have our country lead in the cause of peace and civilization, we can find some comfort in the fact that from even the pettiest of partisan motives this Administration will use all ingenuity to achieve a resounding success. But if they fail what course is left open to them except an appeal to the grossest passions? If they fail, they will in self-justification put the blame on the others. We will be told that their noble intentions were thwarted by the evil ambitions of these foreigners, that while we are an enlightened, sensible people, who desire only peace, the others cannot understand any argument but force and that we must arm to the teeth. I cannot see anything but despair if this Conference should break up in discord.

* * *

But Conferences rarely reach such clear-cut decisions. The League, The Alliance, Failure—

all three are possibilities. But nothing is more improbable than that the choice between these possibilities will be immediately obvious.

We are much more likely to straddle and postpone. We may make a few uncertain steps in the direction of the League; arrange for an International Naval Conference to codify the Law of the Seas; give new encouragement to the Consortium; reaffirm the policy of the Open Door in China, with some reference to the special solidarity of interests of Britain, Japan and America in the Far East—with the question of Japan's policy towards China postponed for future consideration—and some not very sweeping arrangement for the gradual reduction of Naval Armaments. Even if no more than this is recorded in the documents signed and published, we may hope for a real and more important gain in mutual confidence—a result which may not be immediately visible, but which, from year to year, will bear fruit in smaller military appropriations.

The Conference, with the best will in the world, can do little more than register the present sentiment of the participating nations. Its main importance will be the indications it gives of the trend of our Times.

CHAPTER XII

DIPLOMACY AND PUBLIC OPINION

A BLACK shadow sometimes falls on discussions of this Conference at Washington—as the shadow of a soaring hawk disturbs the farmyard. It is the fear that some of the diplomats, in spite of their public assurances, may be secretly harboring aggressive designs. All talk of the reduction of armaments is futile if any nation is suspected of planning foreign conquests, for the people who think themselves threatened will arm. And the life of the world is now so inexorably interwoven that a menace to one is a menace—and an excuse for armaments—to all.

In the general collapse of our hopes for a regenerated world after the War, we run the risk of exaggerated discouragement and a failure to realize the progress the world has in fact made. A century ago such a conference as this would have been dominated by *le secret du roi*. Kings, big and little, were not in any degree responsible to the people; they could play with their little family combinations and personal ambitions and

no one could call them to account. Today, no diplomat dares to take a strong stand on any point, unless he is convinced that he will have popular support at home. And public opinion can be formulated only by public discussion. Everybody knows that our Government can count on united approval in insisting on respect for the Monroe Doctrine, so we all know that Public Opinion in Japan is very jealous of anything which looks like an attempt of a foreign Power to establish itself close at hand on the Asiatic mainland, and that the British people are alert to protect their vital interests on the seas. But these things are not secret.

Secrecy in diplomacy is being overcome, not by the pious wishes of reformers but by the steady shift of power from the small governing cliques of the last century to ever wider circles of citizens. Democracy is not discreet; it has to talk over its vital affairs in public. Every Foreign Office today exerts considerable influence on the press of its country and plays an important rôle in forming—sometimes in perverting—Public Opinion, but no Foreign Office can any longer ignore the will of the people and—at worst they can outwit it—therein lies a great revolution. The democratization of Foreign Affairs is still far from complete, for some old-fashioned diplomats are still recalcitrant. But the catalogue of Foreign

Ministers, who have fallen from power in the last dozen years because they refused to heed the *vox populi*, is impressive. Diplomacy becomes more and more the servant of democracy and thereby loses its secrecy.

In the "Diplomatic Correspondence" of a half century ago, it is common to find the phrase: "My Sovereign insists"; today it is more common to read: "Public opinion in my country is disturbed." The final argument between Mr. Lloyd George and M. Briand is: "My government would fall." Opinion in our modern democracies is often divided and rarely entirely clear, but a politician's tenure of office depends on his ability to appraise it correctly.

So there is somewhat less danger than formerly that the Washington Conference will be disturbed by the secret designs of any of the participants. No Delegation would dare to wreck the Conference on an issue which was not popular at home, and popularity is the antithesis of secrecy. The delegates will keep in close touch with the homeland, their actions will always be influenced, often entirely controlled, by the reports which the telegraph brings them of the movements of public opinion in their own country.

* * *

However, Public Opinion is not always right—nor is it always pacific. While it would be hard

in any modern country to work up sentiment in favor of frankly aggressive policy, the Demos is easily frightened and can be stampeded into almost any folly in the name of self-defense. Reports from Europe indicate that there is a large measure of popular support for military programs, which are at present as ruinous as they are fashionable. The citizens of these new democracies find it quite as hard to sleep soundly, if their armies are not as large as their neighbor's, as was the case with the uneasy heads that used to wear crowns.

Fortunately the tranquillity of our American nights is not troubled by the fear of our neighbors. We are not as likely to wreck the chances of the Conference from fear as we are from bumptiousness.

Not long ago, an eminent Englishman, who is interested in an Anglo-American *rapprochement*, met one of our prominent officials. The formalities of introduction were hardly over when the American said: "You Englishmen must make up your minds to it. We are going to build the biggest Navy in the world." The Britisher, trying to be conciliatory, asked: "Wouldn't you be content with a Navy as big as any other?"

"No," the American replied. "We must have the biggest. We can afford it and we're going to have it."

Now, this American did not have any aggres-

sive intentions against Great Britain—he was just feeling his oats. Unfortunately a great many of his fellow citizens also enjoy the feeling of oats; they are amused by reckless talk—very many more than would follow him into any policy of adventure. But bumptiousness can play just as much havoc with the work of conciliation as plans of aggression.

* * *

If we, Americans, wish to think honestly about this problem of reducing armaments, we must always remember that we are setting the pace. As far as Naval Construction goes, Britain and Japan are tagging along, trying—rather breathlessly—to keep up with us.

Is there any reason for us to build so big a Navy, except that—by skimping on schools and sanitation and other civilized things—we can afford it?

Our vital interests in regard to territorial defense and the Monroe Doctrine are not even threatened. The lessons of this last War are too clear to be misunderstood. No nation or group of nations is going to attack us on this hemisphere. We are too numerous; our land is too full of resources. A war which does not finish quickly is as disastrous to the victor as to the vanquished, and no one could hope to finish us quickly. Those of our interests which lie on

this side of the world are unassailable. Our homeland is not vulnerable to any known weapon, and as for the hypothetical weapons of a vague future, the only thing certain about them is that they would render the ponderous battleships we are now building obsolete junk.

The only rational explanation of our present Naval Program is that we intend to insist on our rights upon the seas and over-seas. It is in defense of our more remote interests that we are maintaining so costly and formidable a military establishment, scaring other people into equally absurd extravagance.

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Increasing our Navy does not decrease the danger of unpleasant friction with Great Britain on the seas; it only accentuates the difficulties in the way of settling this old dispute by friendly negotiations. We are more likely to gain our point in regard to the Freedom of the Seas if we do not incite general suspicion that we ourselves are ambitious to rule the waves. It was that suspicion which vitiated all the eloquence of Germany on the subject.

Perhaps we could outbuild the British if we set ourselves to it, but that is the opposite direction from the reduction of armaments. If we cannot at once get general agreement to our Code of Sea Law, to insure the Freedom of the Seas, we

can settle the whole controversy by accepting the invitation of Lloyd George to come into an Anglo-American-Japanese Alliance. The most direct way to end rivalry in armaments is to go into the League of Nations. Meanwhile every ship we lay down means intensification of Naval Competition.

The defense of our immediate—and even prospective—trade interests in the Far East do not warrant the appalling naval appropriations we are now making. The hangovers from past wars and the preparations for future wars are now costing us considerably more than 80% of our National Income. The profits on our Oriental trade are certainly never going to approximate that figure. This British proposal of a Triple Alliance would offer better protection to our trade than battleships, and would also be very much cheaper.

But commerce is not our sole interest in the Far East, and if we have any obligation to help China through this distressful period of reorganization, we must admit that this Triple Alliance would be generally considered a betrayal. It is rather too much to assume, in the way of political self-denial, that such a combination would benefit China. If we feel that we should protect "the territorial integrity and the political sovereignty of China," there is no argument left against the

much discussed Article X of the Covenant of the League. If our duty towards China is really our prime interest in the Far East, we could achieve our purpose much more surely—and at infinitely less expense—by joining and strengthening the League, which has already given China ample guarantees, than by taking on the job single-handed.

* * *

There is a large possibility—I, personally, believe a probability—that our Delegation at the Washington Conference will be able to bring about a notable reduction of armaments by purely diplomatic negotiations. But the process could be speeded up and extended, if the public opinion of the nations involved is outspoken in its insistence. The Negotiators will have their ears on the telephone. If the people of the various lands raise their voices they will be heard.

A very special responsibility rests on us in this country. We are at present setting the pace in Naval construction. If we are really in earnest in our wish to reduce Armaments, the obvious course for us is to do it. The House of Representatives is more immediately amenable to public opinion than the Senate and it is the House that votes appropriations and has the power to cut them. In no other way could we do more to encourage the democracies of the other countries

to bring pressure on their delegates than if we do it ourselves. If, in the midst of the Negotiations at Washington, Congress, under the push of the people at home, should cut the Naval Appropriation, the Negotiations would proceed much more rapidly and successfully.

Few Congressmen would be adverse to making a reputation for economy these days, if they were encouraged by the unmistakable urging of their constituencies. Unfortunately, the taxpayers, who suffer under the burden of armaments, are not so articulate as the small minority who like them. On the one hand, most Congressmen want to be reelected. On the other hand, most electors are too indifferent to write their wishes down on a telegram blank.

If the good old English word "wicked" means anything at all, it applies to those influences which in the present tragic situation stand in the way of disarmament. There was a famous Divine, who used often to quote the passage from the Scriptures: "The wicked flee when no man pursueth." "But," he would always add, "they run much faster when somebody's after them."

If we leave this matter to our diplomats, they will do their utmost to bring about a limitation of armaments. The country rightly has confidence in the integrity, energy and ability of Mr. Hughes. If we slip off all the responsibilities on

him and his associates, he will probably be able to work through the tangle of jealousies and distrusts to an increased and increasing confidence which will make possible some steps towards reducing armaments. If the people of the United States really have the Will to Peace, if they will work together and concentrate their energies on this, they can force Congress this fall to make the gesture of conciliation by cutting the Naval Appropriations—and the Conference will be a sure and huge success.

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